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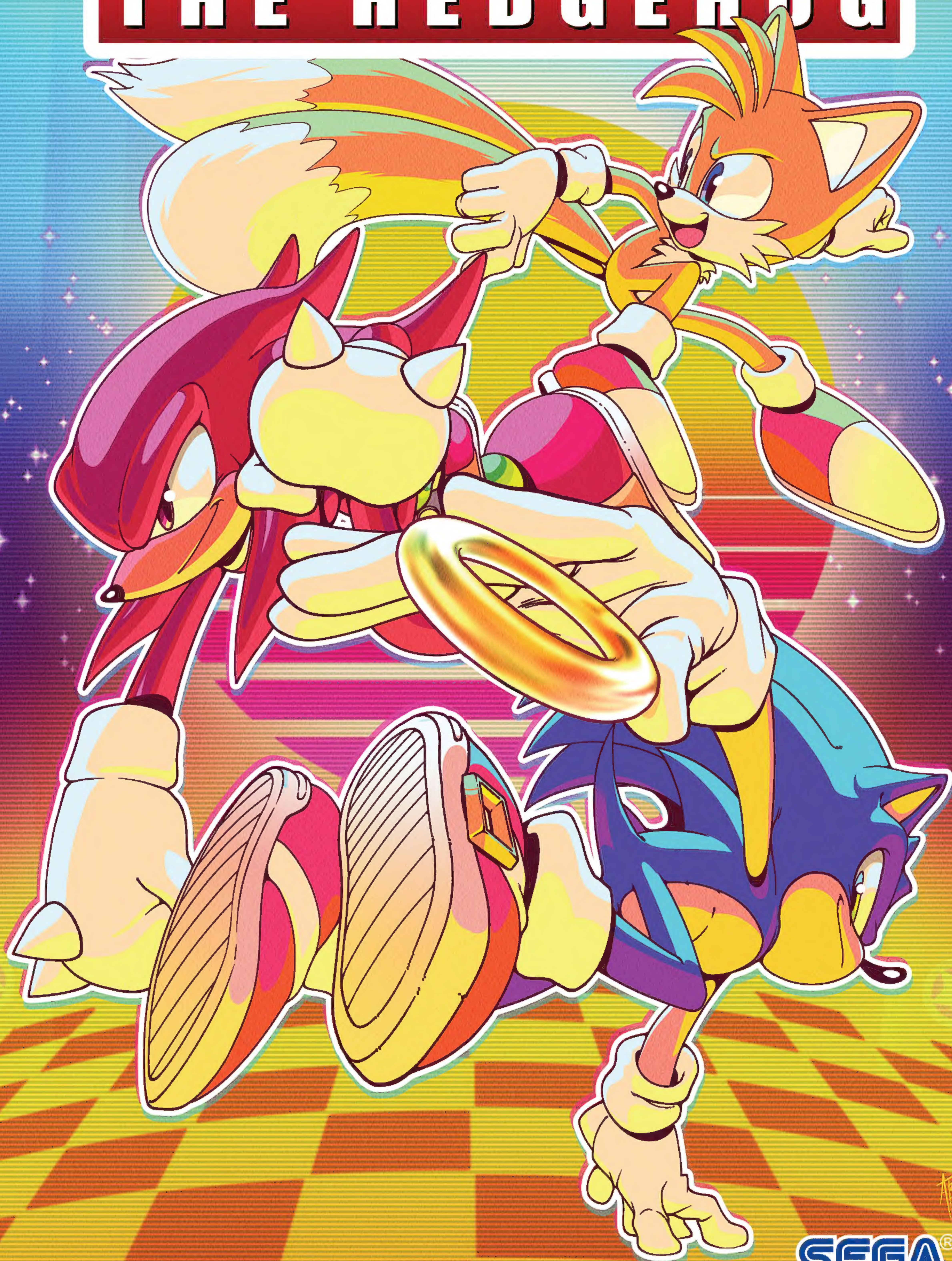
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FCBD

SONIC

TM

THE HEDGEHOG



SEGA®



“DEEP TROUBLE”

STORY
IAN FLYNN

ART
BRACARDI CURRY

LETTERS
SHAWN LEE

“PRELUDE TO DISASTER”

STORY
DAVID MARIOTTE

ART
VARIOUS

LETTERS
SHAWN LEE

COVER BY
ADAM BRYCE THOMAS

EDITOR
DAVID MARIOTTE
RILEY FARMER

Special thanks to Mai Kiyotaki, Michael Cisneros, Sandra Jo, Sonic Team, and everyone at Sega for their invaluable assistance.

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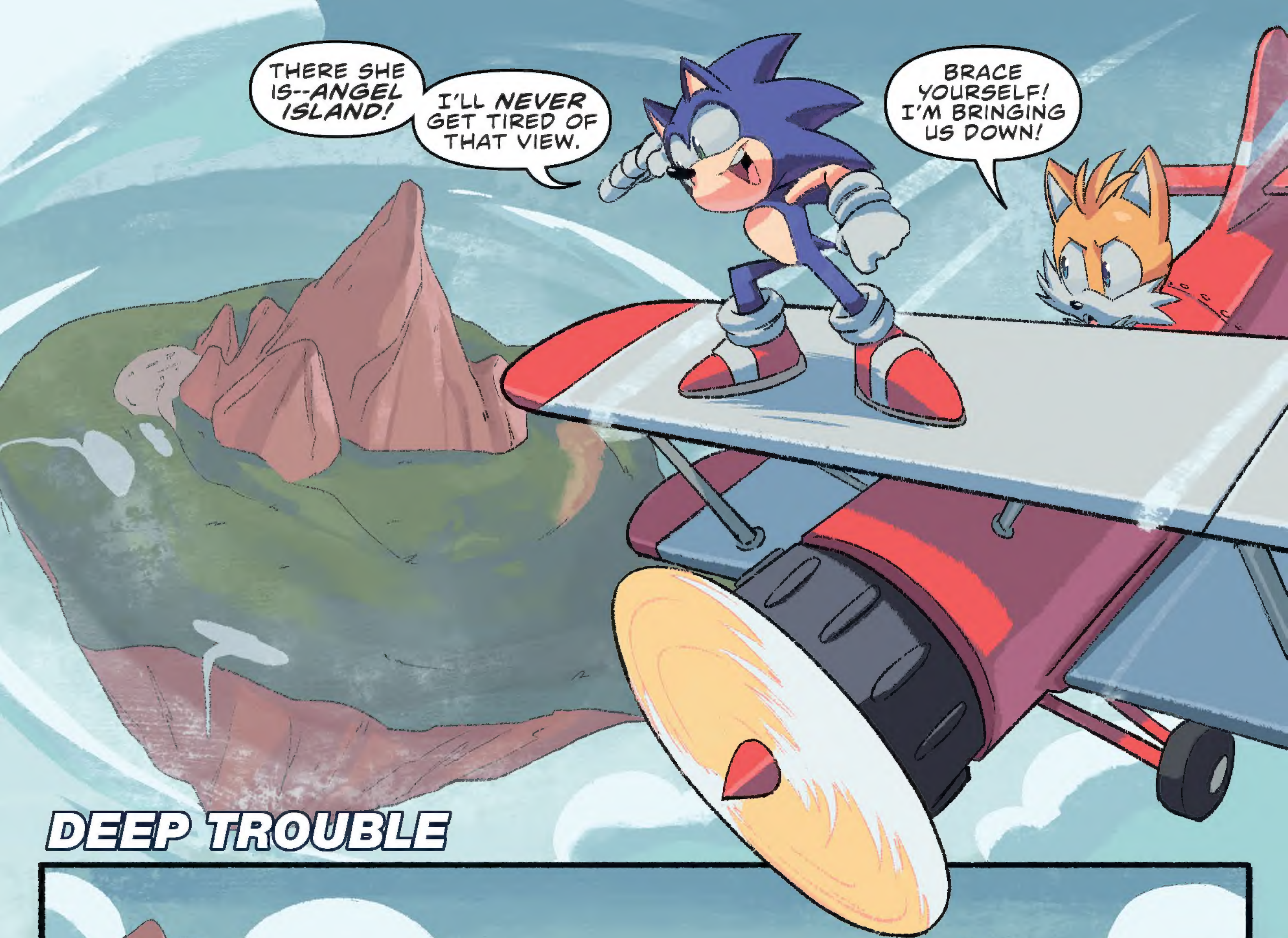
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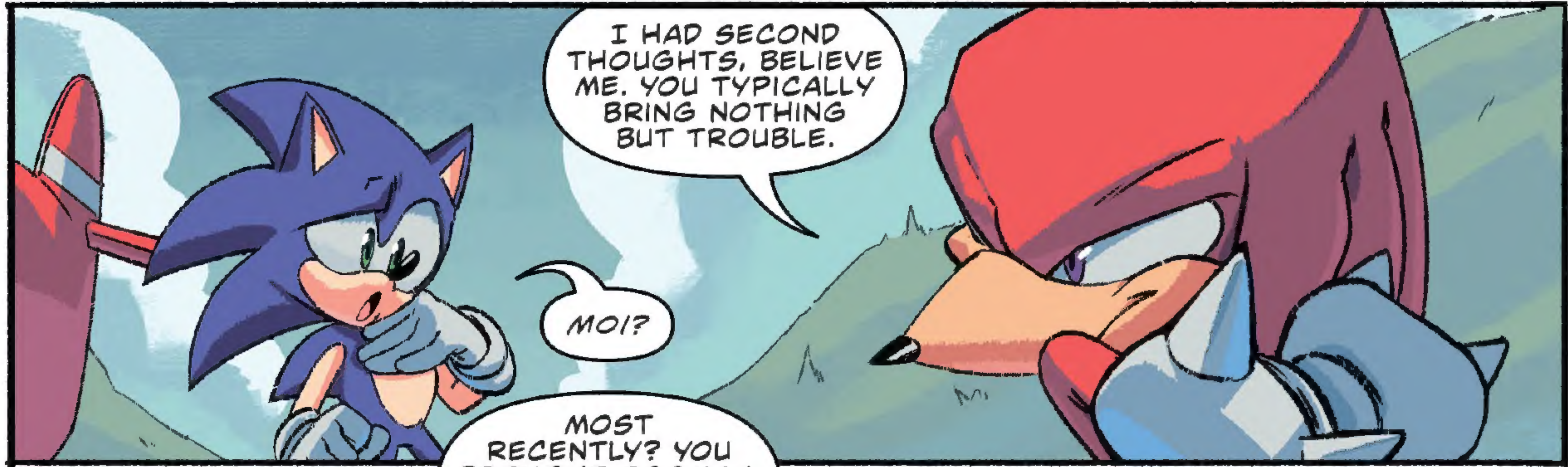


DEEP TROUBLE





WHADDUP, KNUX?! I CAN'T THINK OF THE LAST TIME YOU INVITED US UP HERE.



I HAD SECOND THOUGHTS, BELIEVE ME. YOU TYPICALLY BRING NOTHING BUT TROUBLE.

MOI?

MOST RECENTLY? YOU BROUGHT EGGMAN, MONSTERS, AND A PLAGUE TO MY ISLAND*.



IT WAS END-OF-THE-WORLD STAKES!

I WAS ABOVE IT ALL. YOU DRAGGED IT UP HERE!

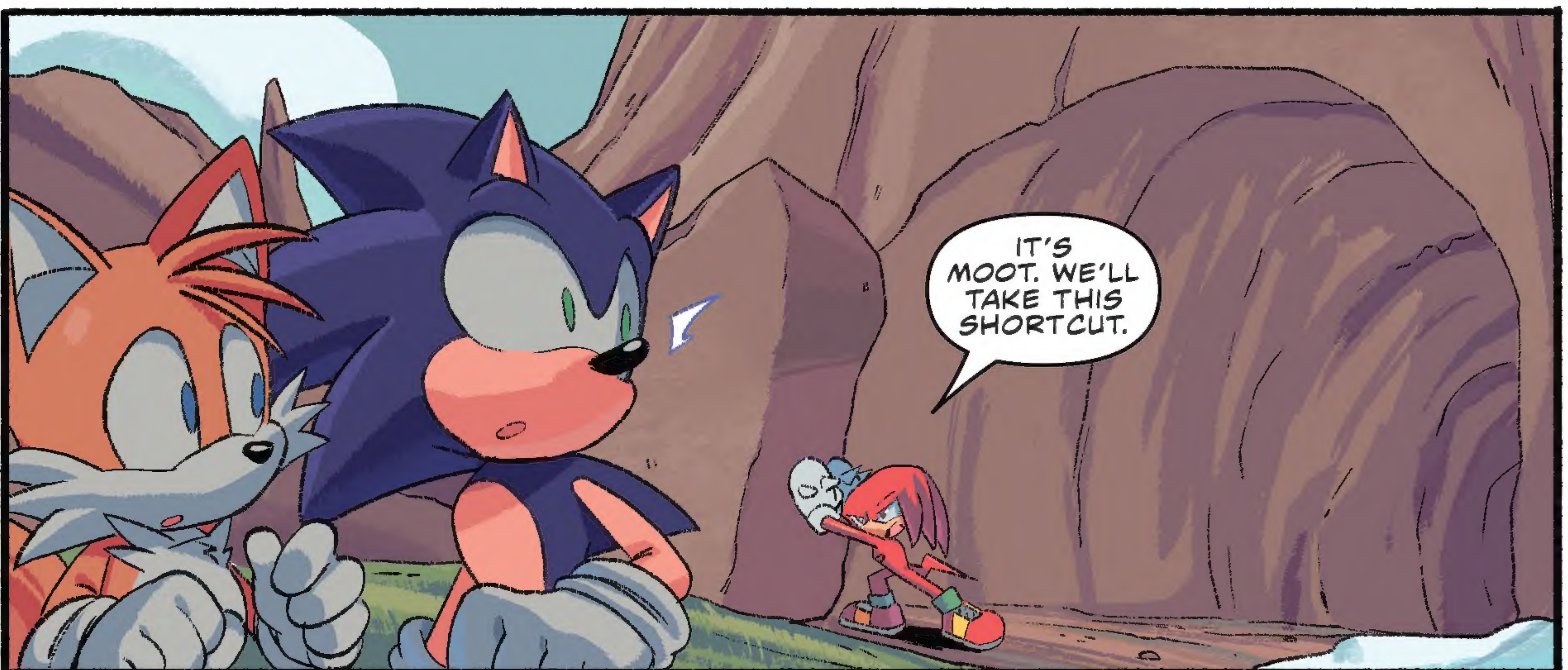
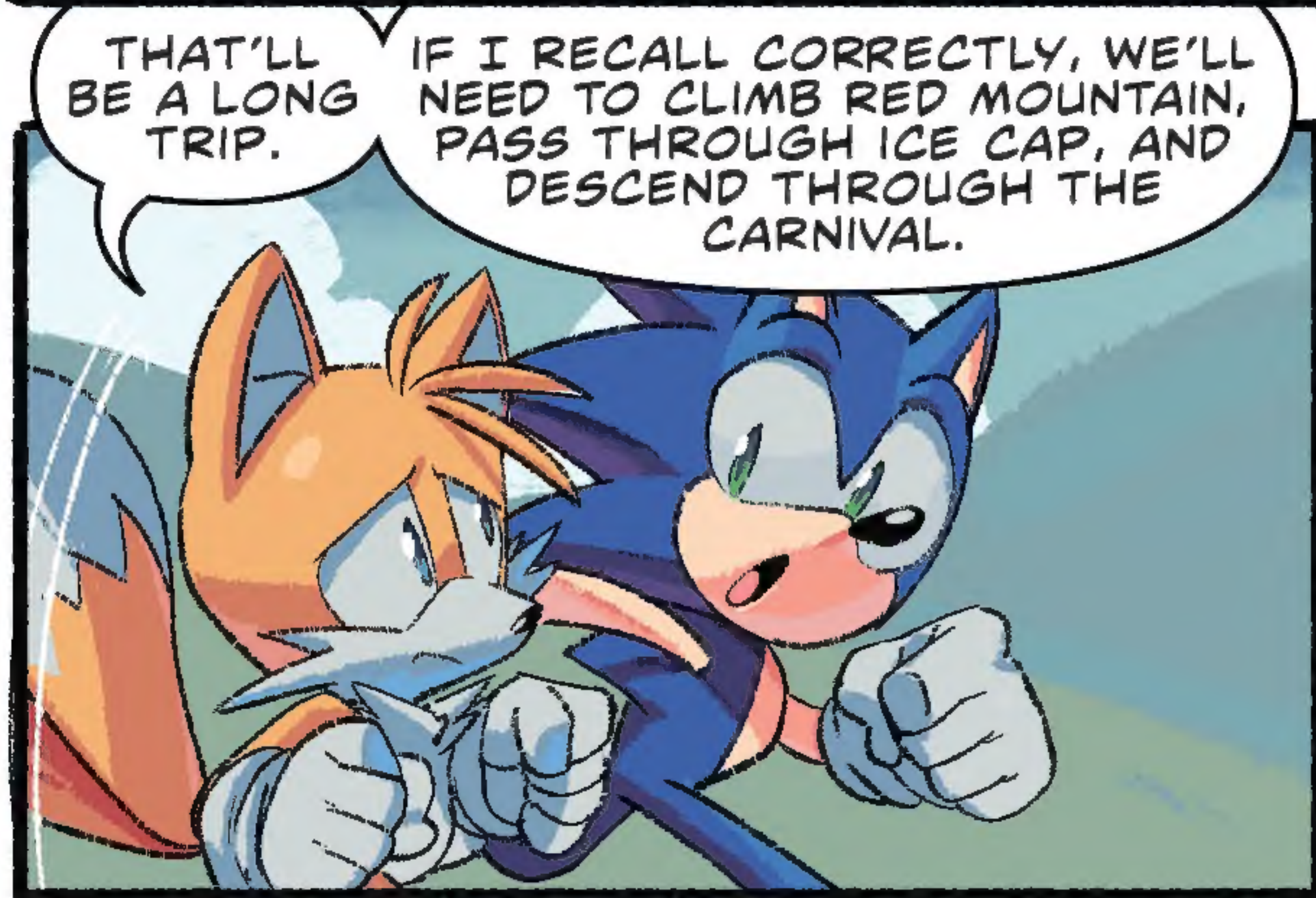
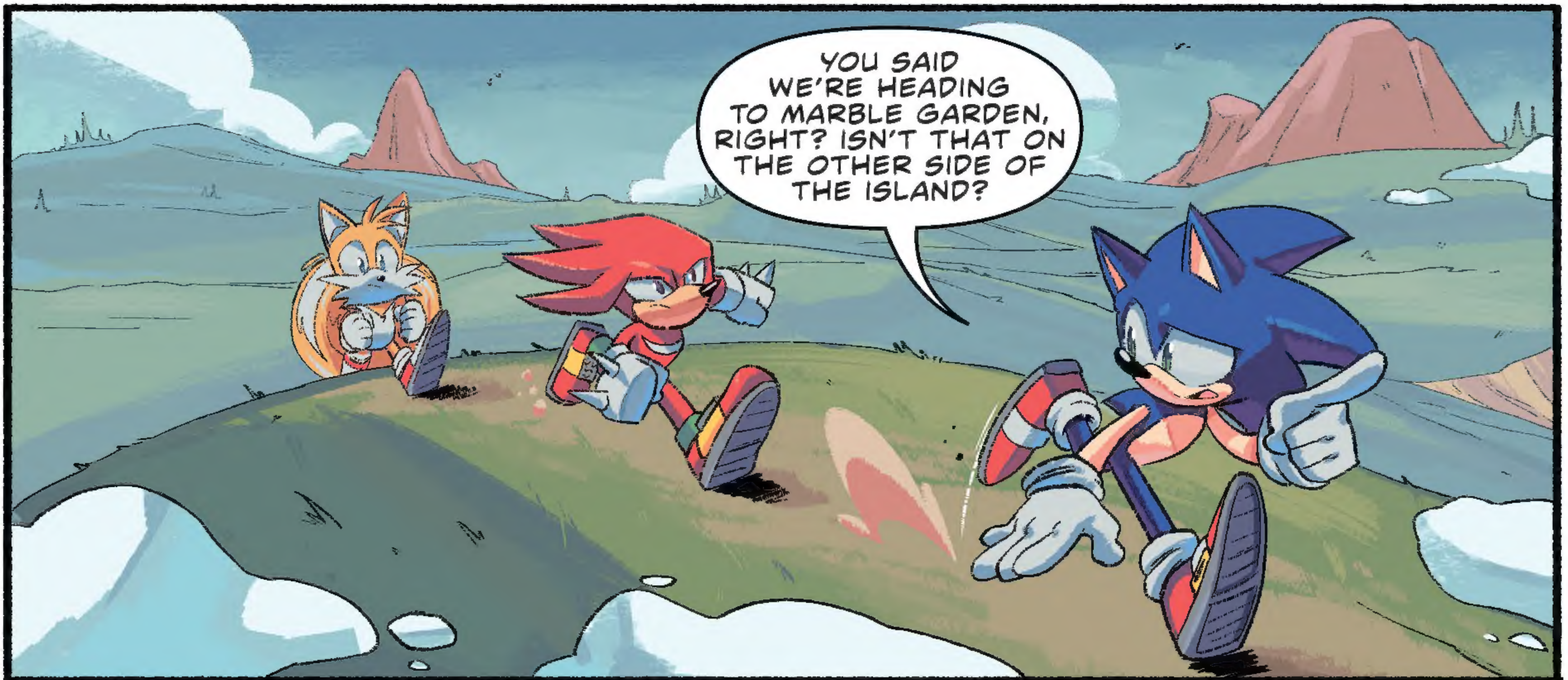
SEE STH#25-29! - EDS.



AND THANKS TO YOUR HELP, WE ALL CAME TOGETHER TO SAVE EVERYONE!

THAT'S WHAT'S IMPORTANT, RIGHT?







ANOTHER
AERIAL VIEW
OF THE ISLAND
WOULD'VE BEEN
NICE, BUT THIS IS
PRETTY COOL,
TOO.



I'M ALWAYS
IMPRESSED
WITH HOW WELL
YOU KNOW THE
ISLAND'S
SECRETS!

IT'S THE
ONLY WAY
HE COULD
STAY AHEAD
OF ME.



I DON'T KNOW
EVERYTHING ABOUT
IT. I DIDN'T FIND THIS
TUNNEL UNTIL I WAS
SCOURING THE ISLAND
FOR METAL VIRUS
REMAINS.

THERE ARE
WHOLE REGIONS
I STILL HAVEN'T
EXPLORED.



I
DON'T
LIKE
THAT.

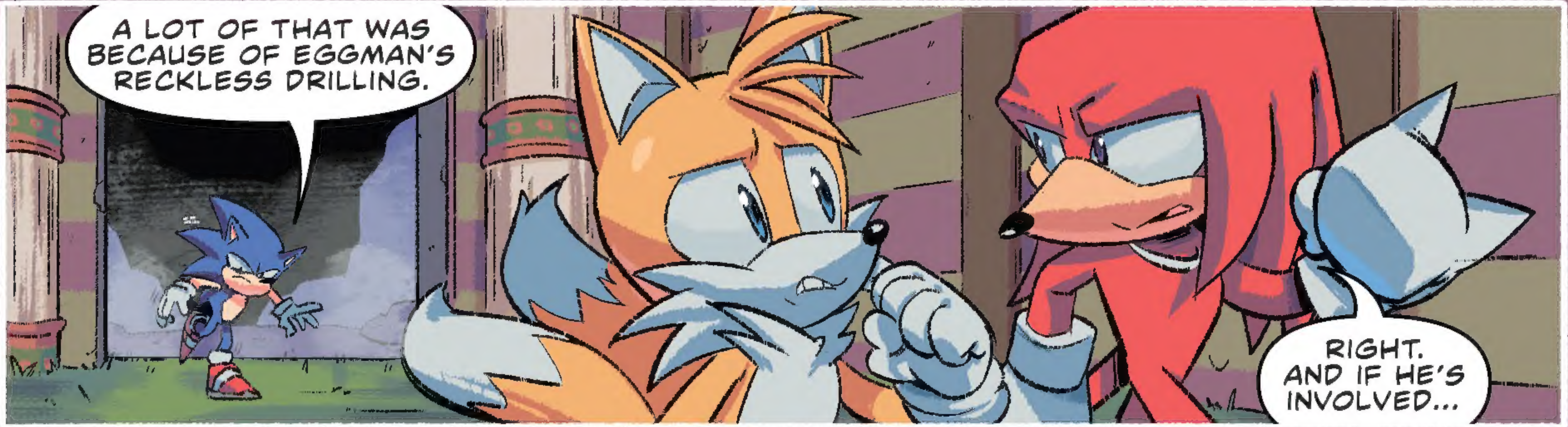


MARBLE GARDEN. EVERYBODY OUT.



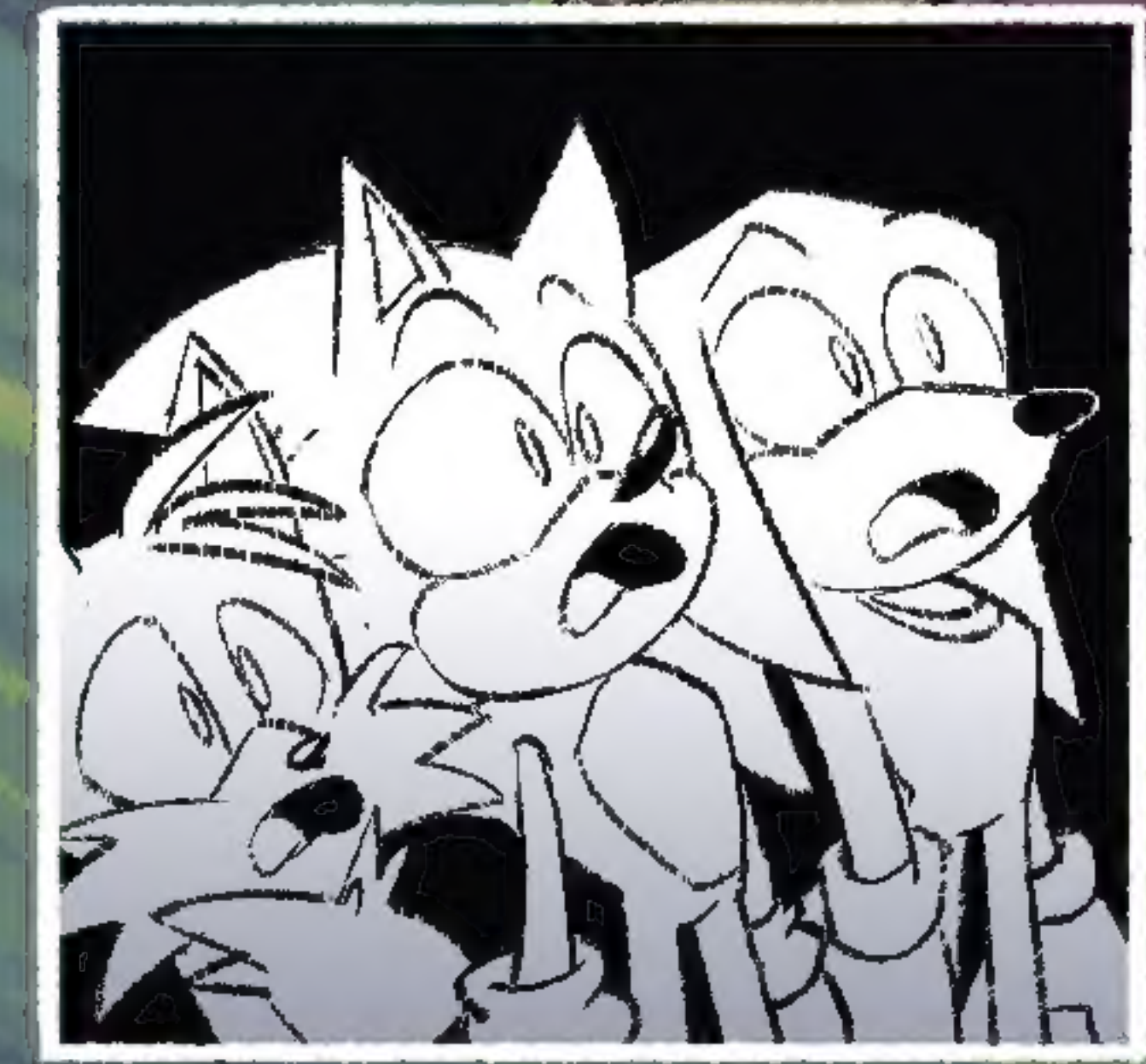
THIS PLACE WAS PRETTY UNSTABLE THE LAST TIME I WAS HERE.

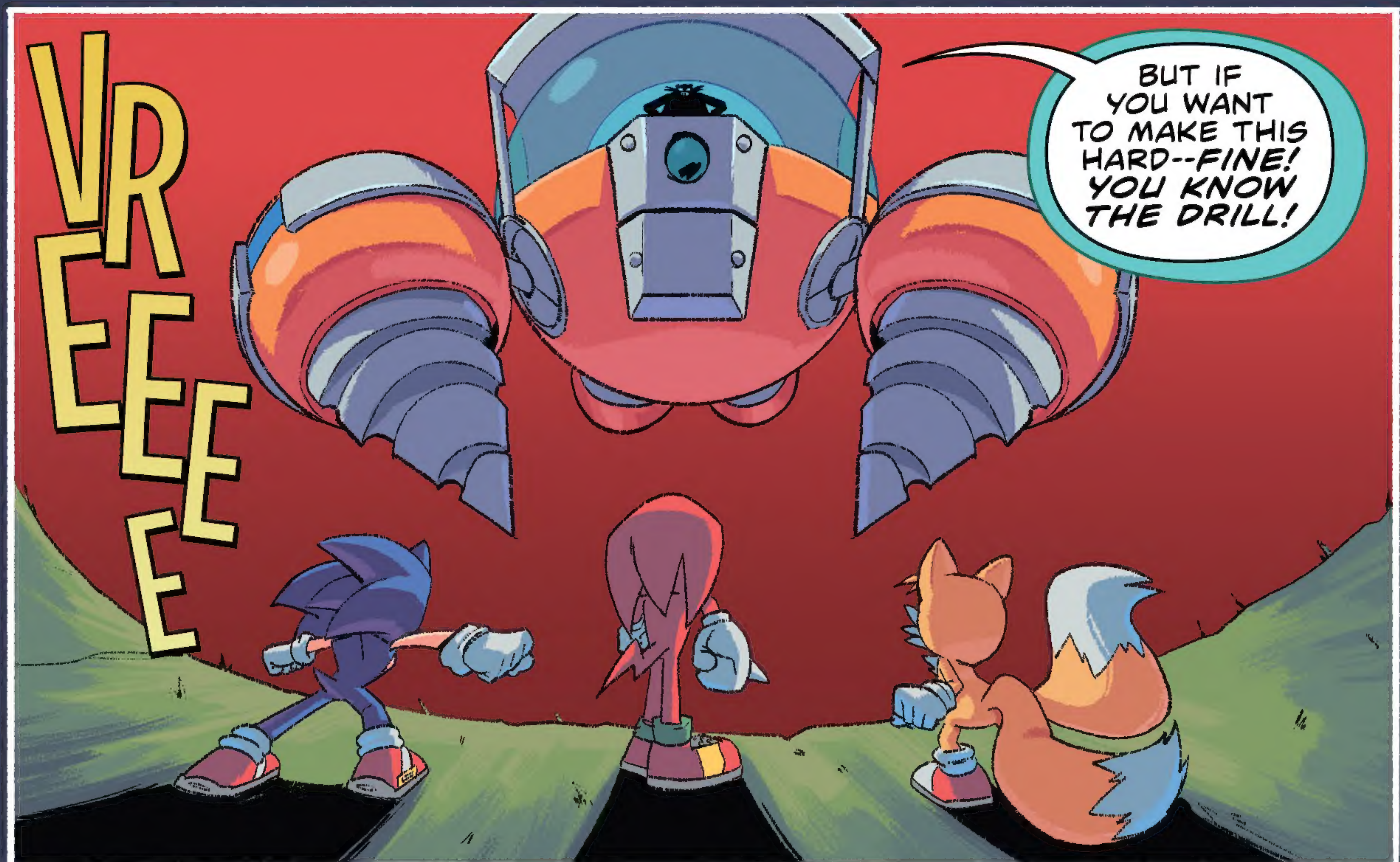
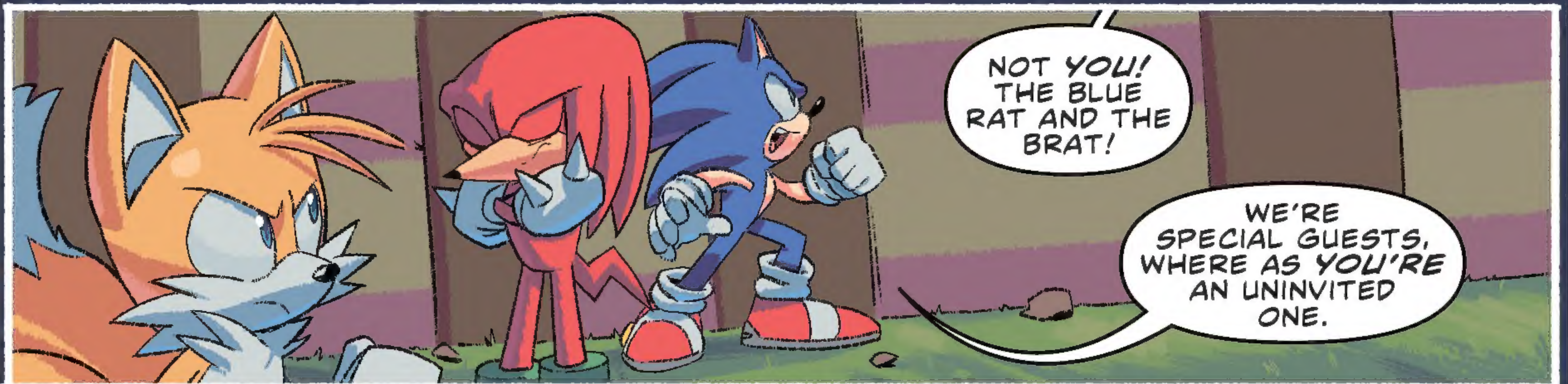
YEAH, AND THE QUAKES HAVE ONLY GOTTEN WORSE. WATCH YOUR STEP.

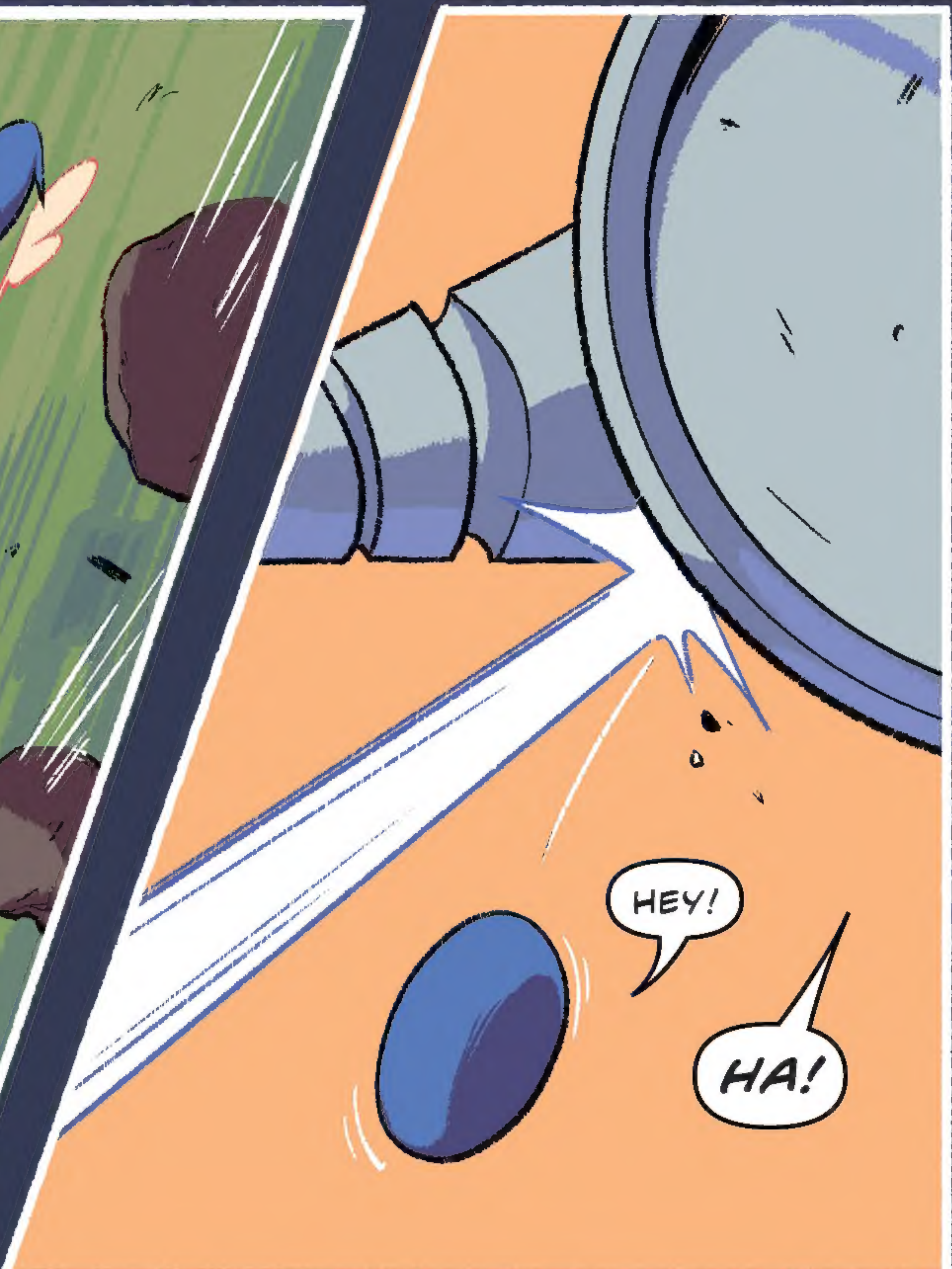


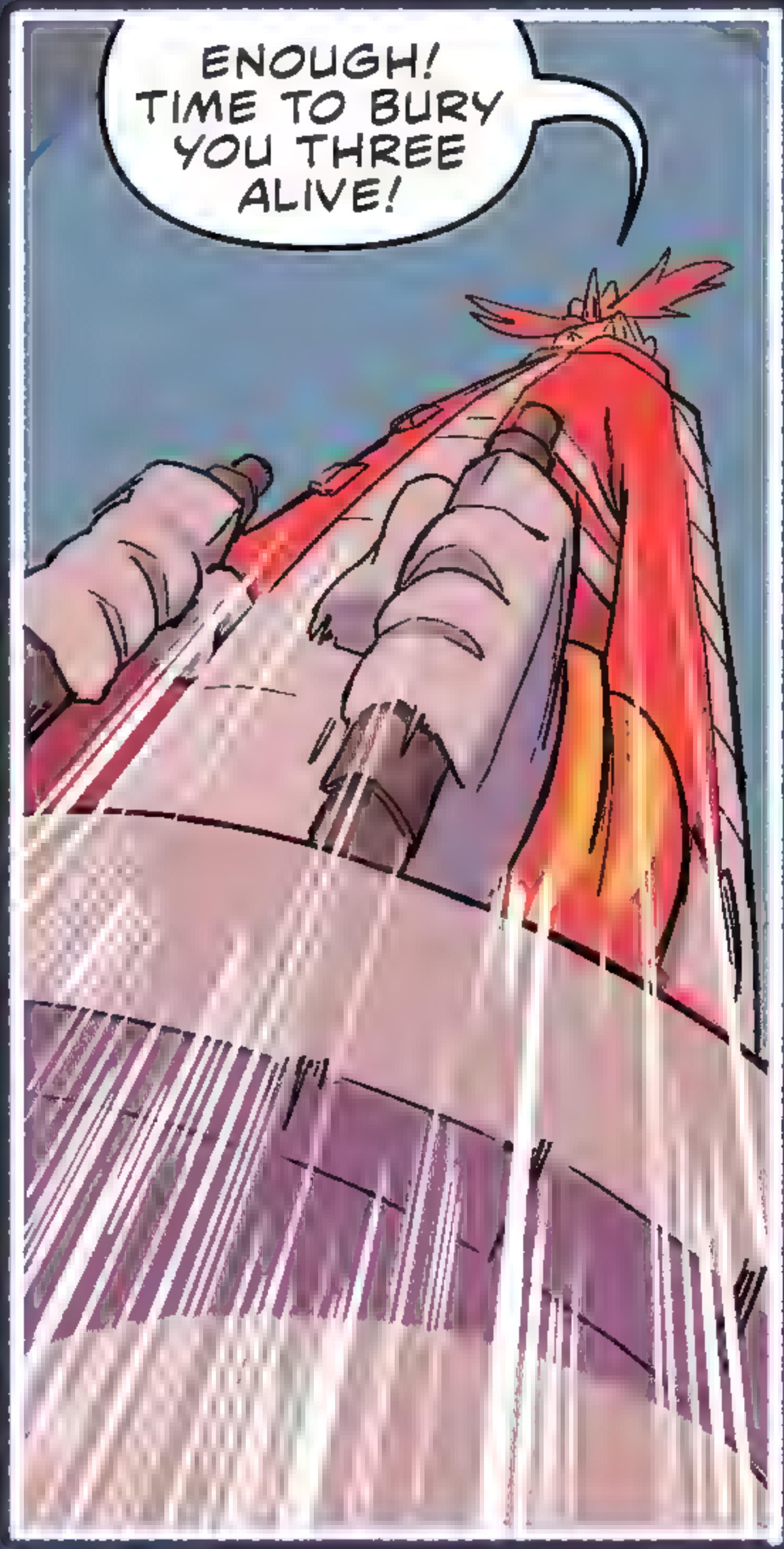
A LOT OF THAT WAS BECAUSE OF EGGMAN'S RECKLESS DRILLING.

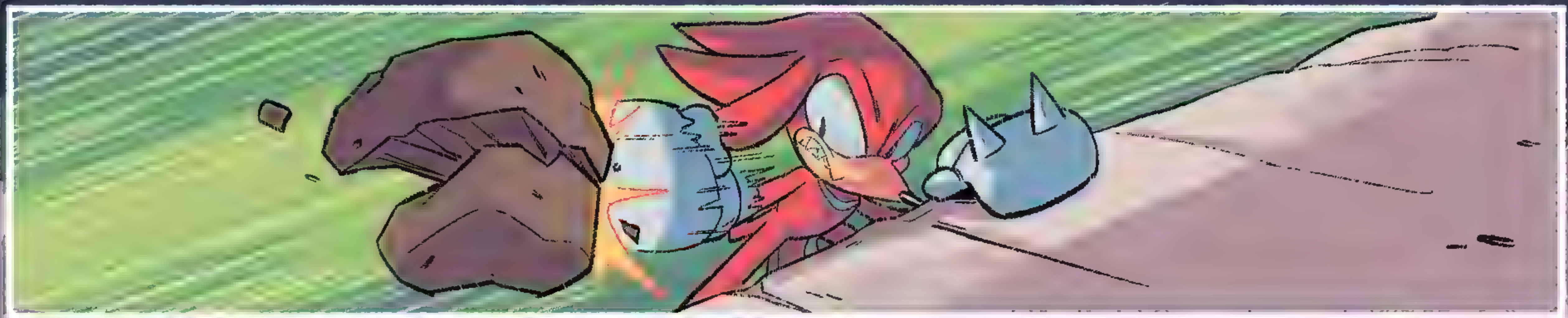
RIGHT. AND IF HE'S INVOLVED...

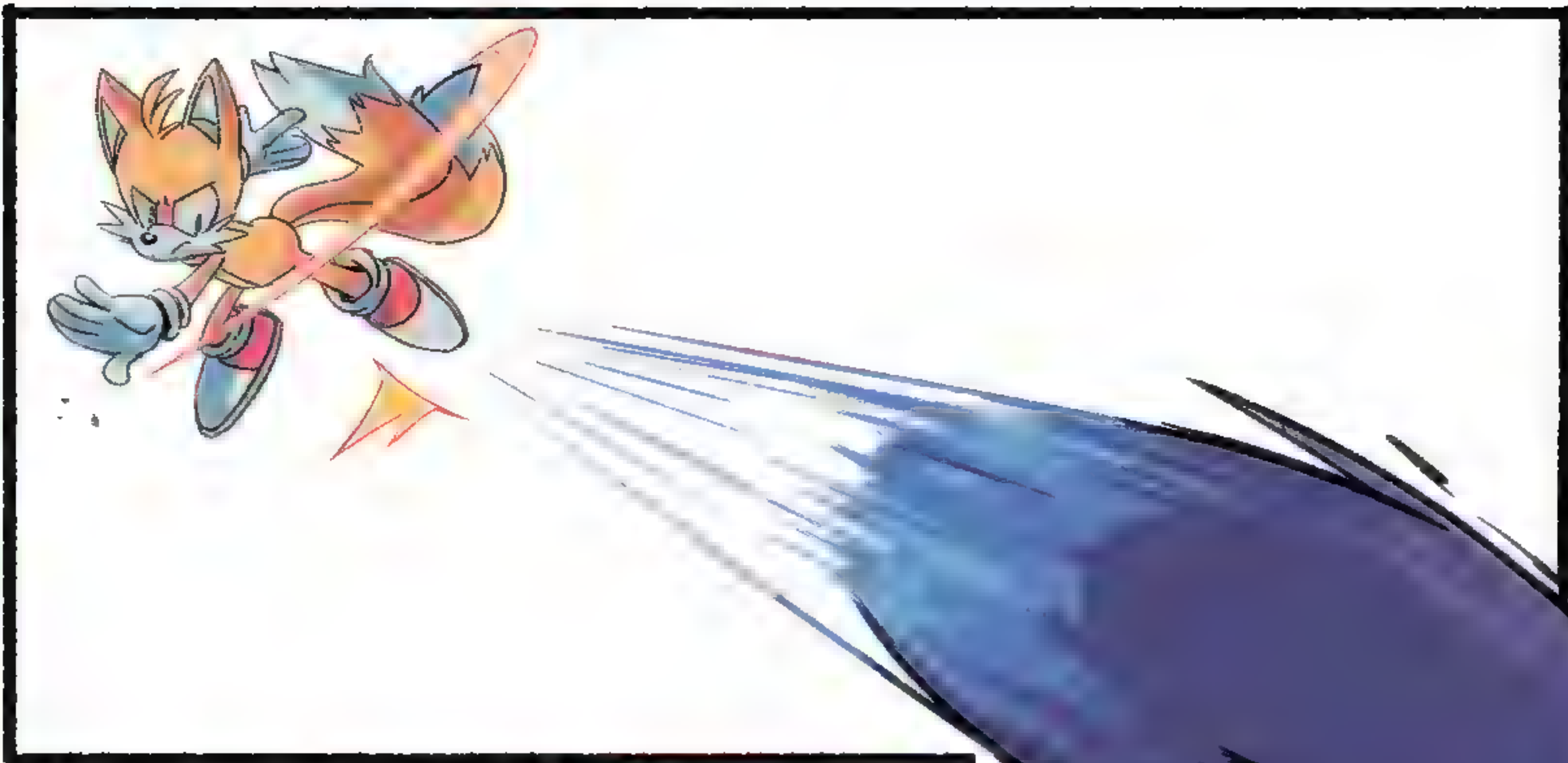








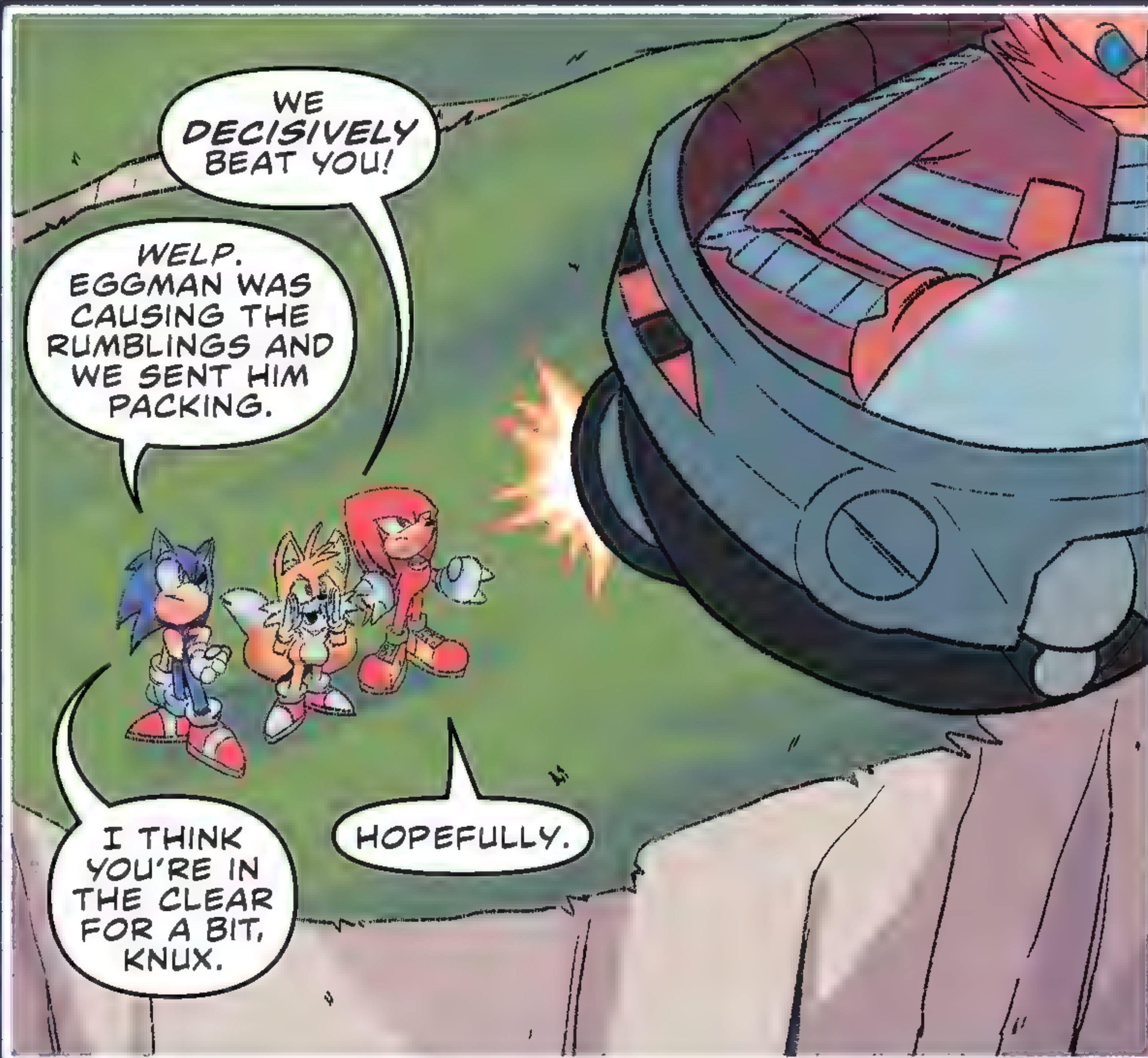






I STILL TORE UP SOME REAL ESTATE!

I CAN STILL CLAIM A VICTORY, YOU FOOLS!



WE DECISIVELY BEAT YOU!

WELP. EGGMAN WAS CAUSING THE RUMBLINGS AND WE SENT HIM PACKING.

I THINK YOU'RE IN THE CLEAR FOR A BIT, KNUX.

HOPEFULLY.



YOU'RE WELCOME TO FLY BACK WITH US. RELAX A BIT, MAYBE SEE WHAT'S BEEN DONE WITH RESTORATION HQ?

I APPRECIATE THE OFFER, BUT I'LL PASS.



I REALIZE NOW THERE'RE STILL MYSTERIES ON THIS ISLAND TO BE UNCOVERED.

I WON'T BE SATISFIED UNTIL I'VE FOUND THEM ALL.



WELL IF YOU NEED BACK-UP AGAIN, YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND US.

SURE. THANKS FOR THE HELP.

ANY TIME, BUDDY.

END.



"LET'S GO OVER IT ONE MORE TIME, SHALL WE?"

"THIS IS SONIC THE HEDGEHOG."



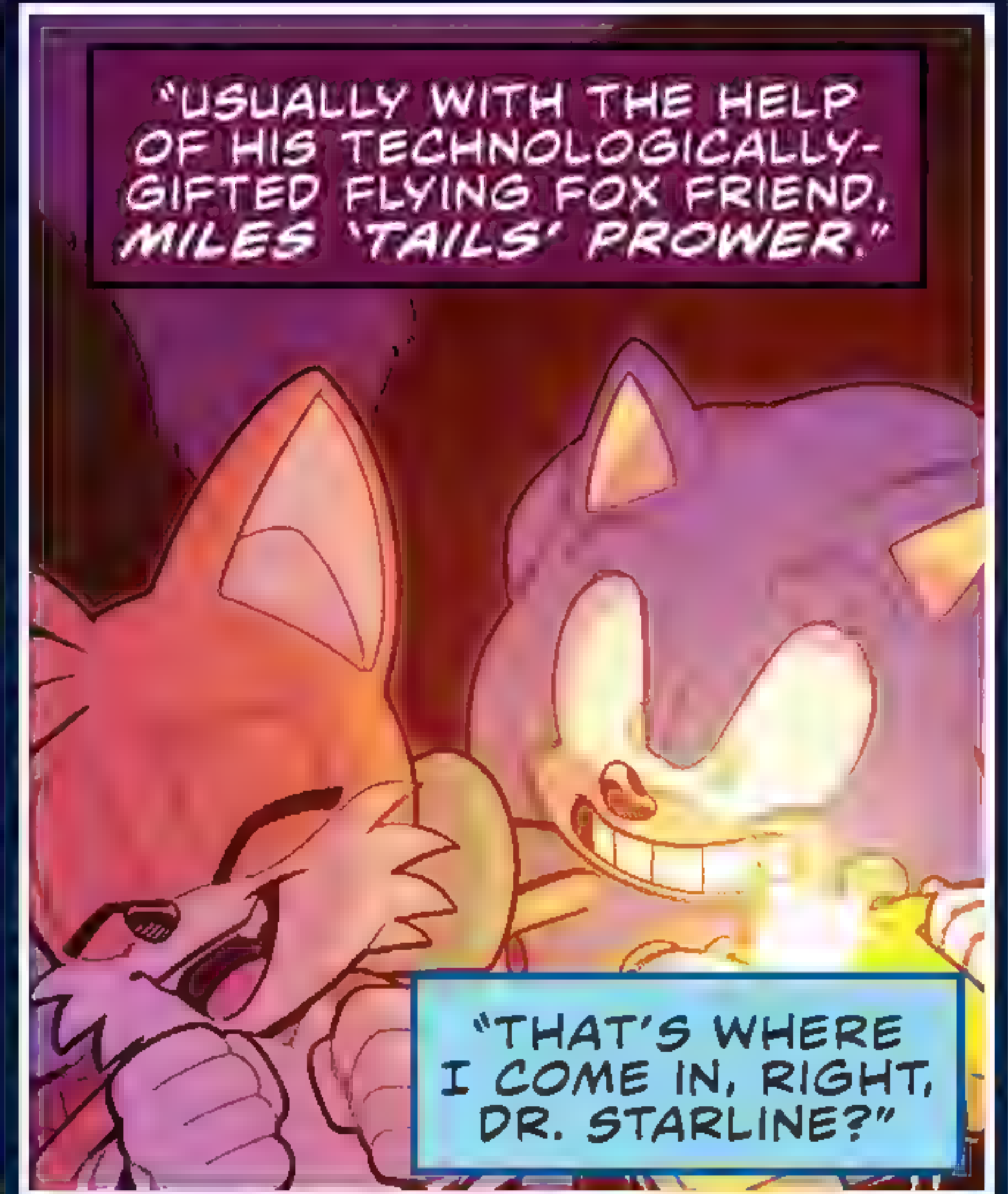
"THE BLUE BLUR. FASTEST THING IN THE WORLD. THE SUPER-SPEEDY HE--"

"BIG FAKER POSER NOT-THE-FASTEST LOSER, GOT IT. NEXT."



"DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE HEDGEHOG'S TALENTS. HE'S A FORMIDABLE FOE, EVEN FOR THE LIKES OF THE GREAT AND TERRIBLE DR. EGGMAN."

"DESPITE ALL ODDS, SONIC REGULARLY MANAGES TO FOIL THE DOCTOR'S PLOTS."



"USUALLY WITH THE HELP OF HIS TECHNOLOGICALLY-GIFTED FLYING FOX FRIEND, MILES 'TAILS' PROWER."

"THAT'S WHERE I COME IN, RIGHT, DR. STARLINE?"



"EXACTLY. ONE OF THE HEDGEHOG'S GREAT STRENGTHS IS HIS ALLIES. MESS WITH SONIC AND SUDDENLY A DOZEN DO-GOODERS WILL BE COMING FOR YOU. WHICH IS WHY--"

"SO WHAT?! KIT CAN HOLD OFF THE EXTRAS WHILE I'M MAKING HIM INTO THE BLUE SMEAR ON THE PAVEMENT. AND ONCE I'M DONE WITH HIM..."

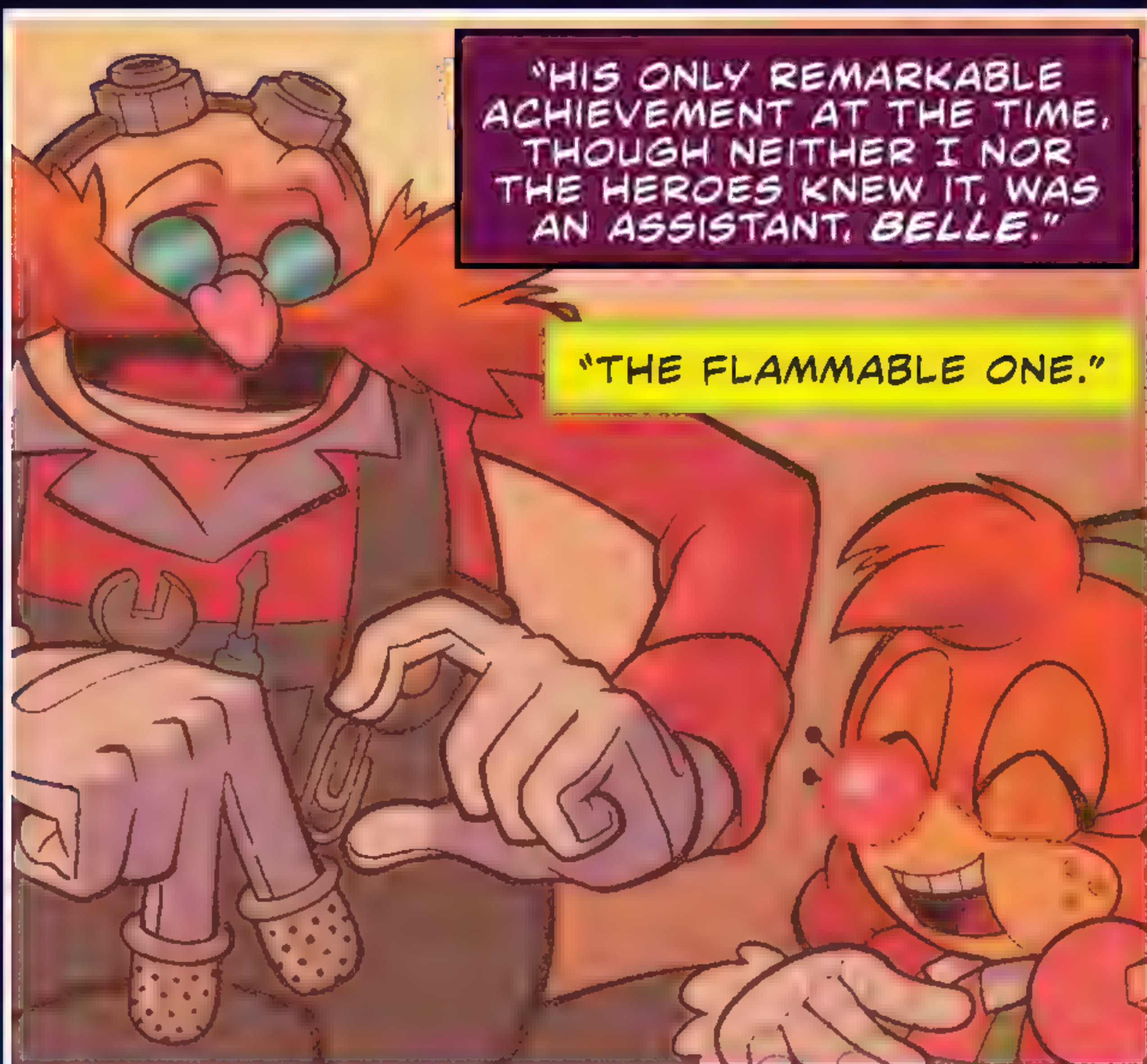
"I-I-I THINK I CAN KEEP THEM BUSY, SURGE. AS LONG AS YOU'RE THERE TO--"

"...I'LL FINISH THEM ALL OFF!"

PRELUDE TO DISASTER



"PERHAPS A MORE CONCRETE EXAMPLE WOULD WORK IT'S WAY THROUGH. NOT LONG AGO, THE GREATEST SCIENTIFIC MIND IN THE WORLD WAS REDUCED TO A PATHETIC SHELL OF HIS FORMER SELF, MR. TINKER, AFTER SUFFERING A TEMPORARY LOSS TO THE HEDGEHOG.



"HIS ONLY REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT AT THE TIME, THOUGH NEITHER I NOR THE HEROES KNEW IT, WAS AN ASSISTANT, BELLE."

"THE FLAMMABLE ONE."

"INDEED, AND AN UNEXPECTED SPLINTER IN OUR FINGER, THOUGH NOT WHOLLY WITHOUT HER USES...



"...WHILE THE DOCTOR WAS MISSING, AN IMPOSTER TOOK HIS PLACE.

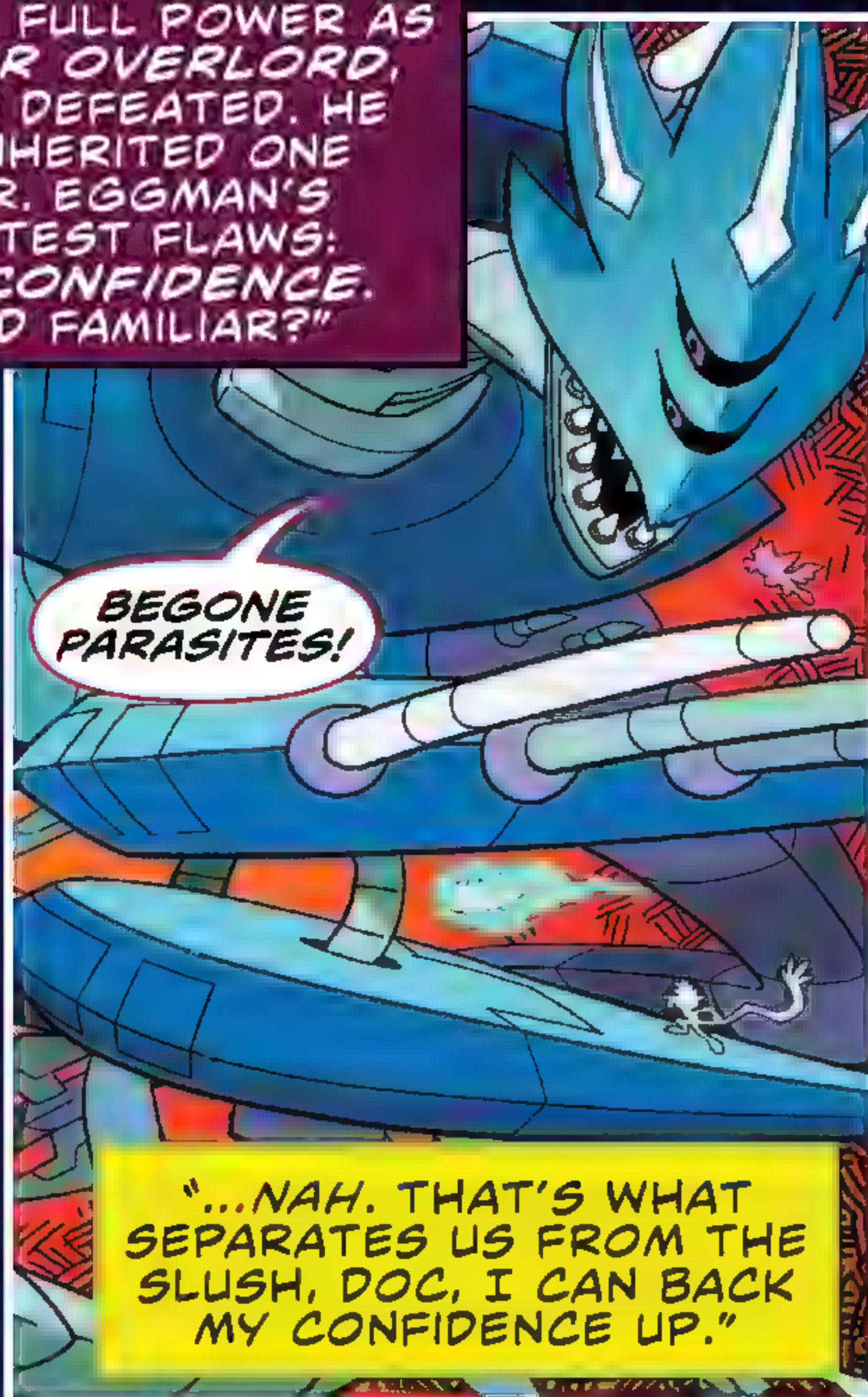


"THE UPGRADED METAL SONIC BOASTED THE DOCTOR'S BIO-SIGNATURE AND COMMANDED THE EGGMAN EMPIRE."

"HOWEVER, HE LACKED THE DOCTOR'S VISION, DECIDING ONCE AGAIN TO GO AFTER THE MASTER EMERALD AND EMPOWER HIMSELF TO A SUPERIOR STATE.



"EVEN AT FULL POWER AS MASTER OVERLORD, HE WAS DEFEATED. HE HAD INHERITED ONE OF DR. EGGMAN'S GREATEST FLAWS: OVERCONFIDENCE. SOUND FAMILIAR?"



BEGONE PARASITES!

"...NAH. THAT'S WHAT SEPARATES US FROM THE SLUSH, DOC, I CAN BACK MY CONFIDENCE UP."

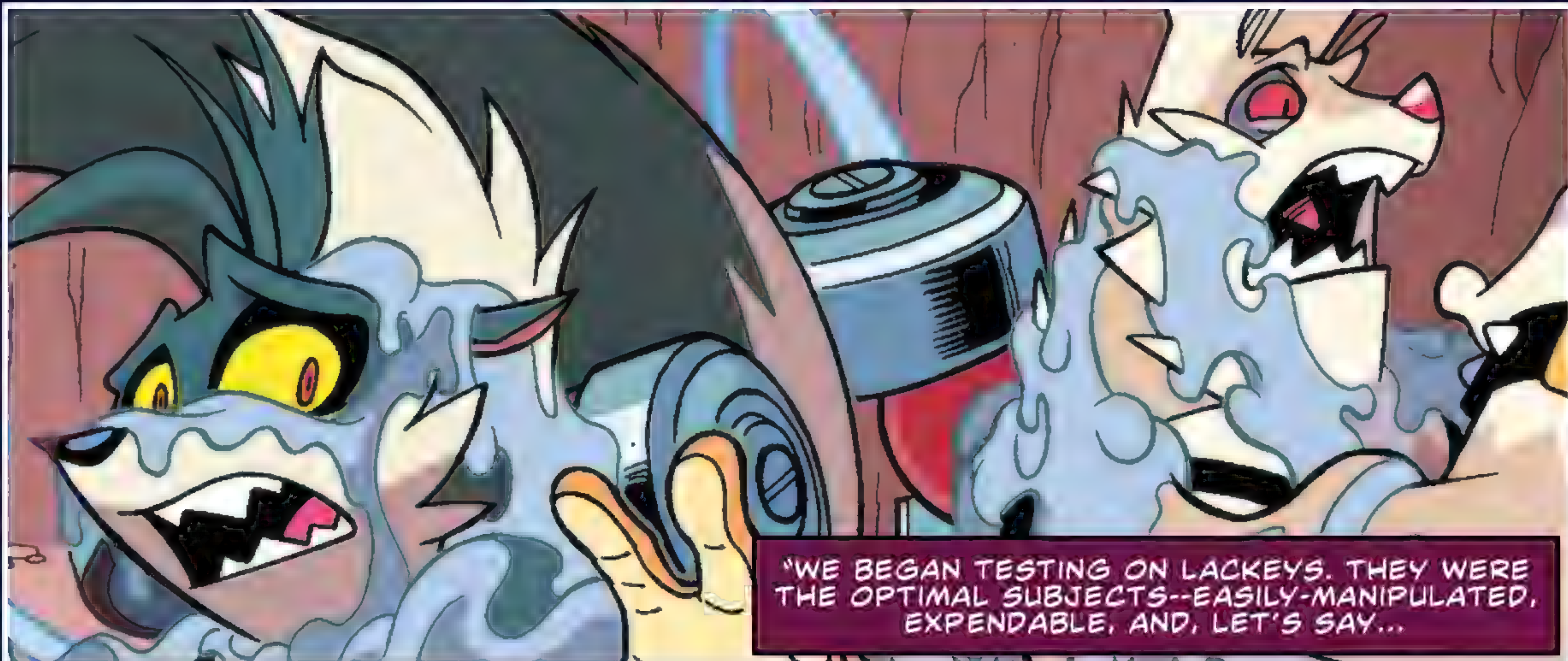
"FORTUNATELY, METAL SONIC HAD HIS USES. HIS DISTRACTING THE HEROES GAVE MY GOONS TIME TO RECLAIM MR. TINKER.



"AND METAL SONIC PROVED TO BE THE FINAL KEY I NEEDED TO AWAKEN DR. EGGMAN'S REVOLUTIONARY MIND ONCE AGAIN."

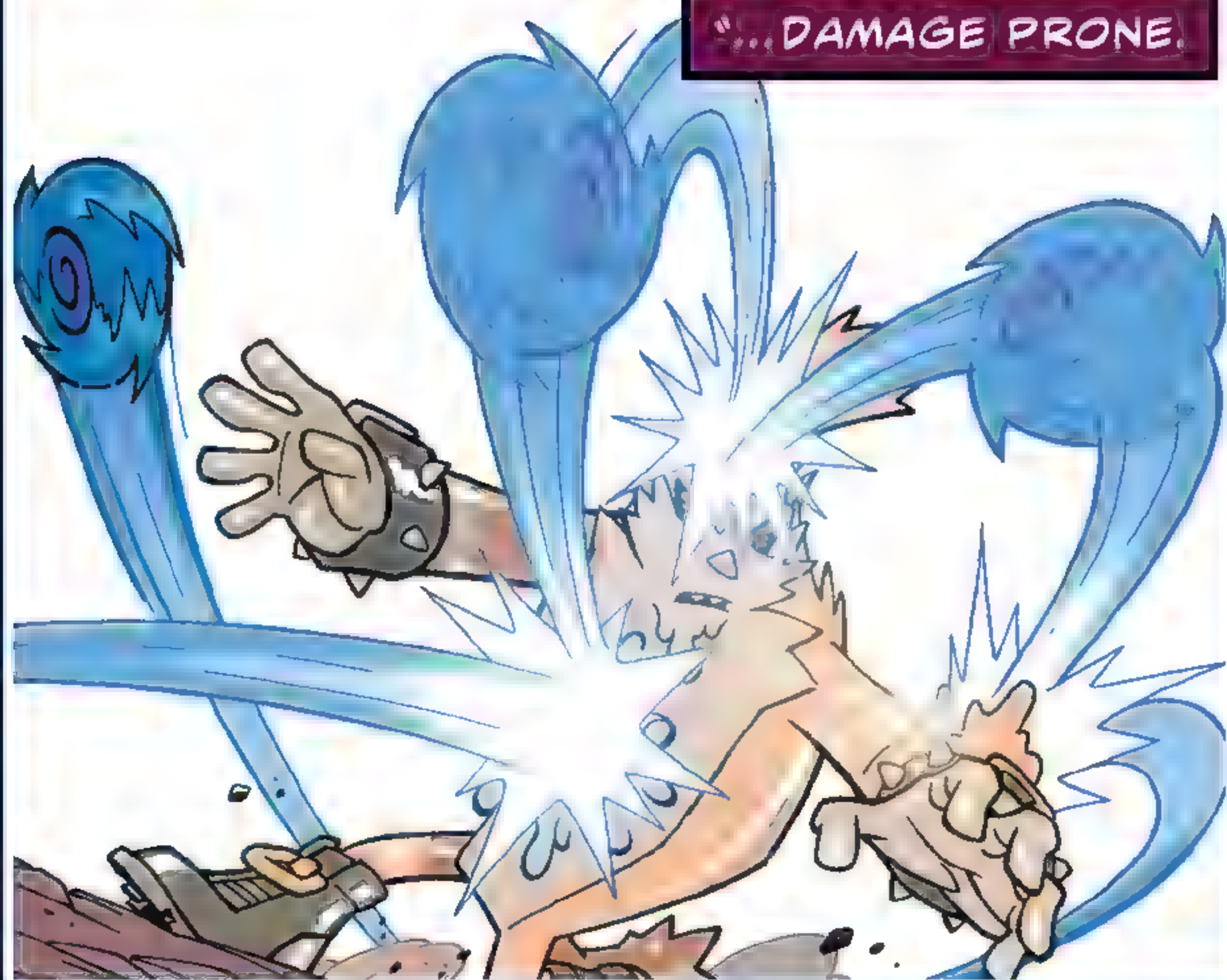


"FOR A BRIEF TIME, ALL WAS GOOD. DR. EGGMAN PRODUCED A HIGH-MASTERPIECE WITH THE METAL VIRUS, AND I WAS LEARNING AT HIS SIDE.



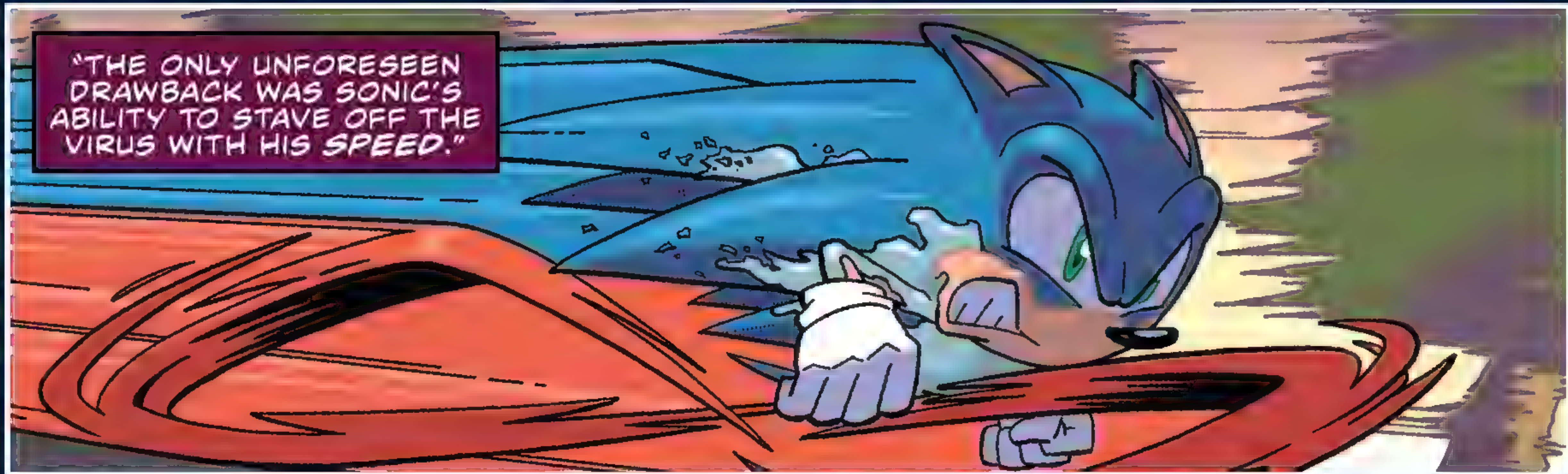
"WE BEGAN TESTING ON LACKEYS. THEY WERE THE OPTIMAL SUBJECTS--EASILY-MANIPULATED, EXPENDABLE, AND, LET'S SAY...

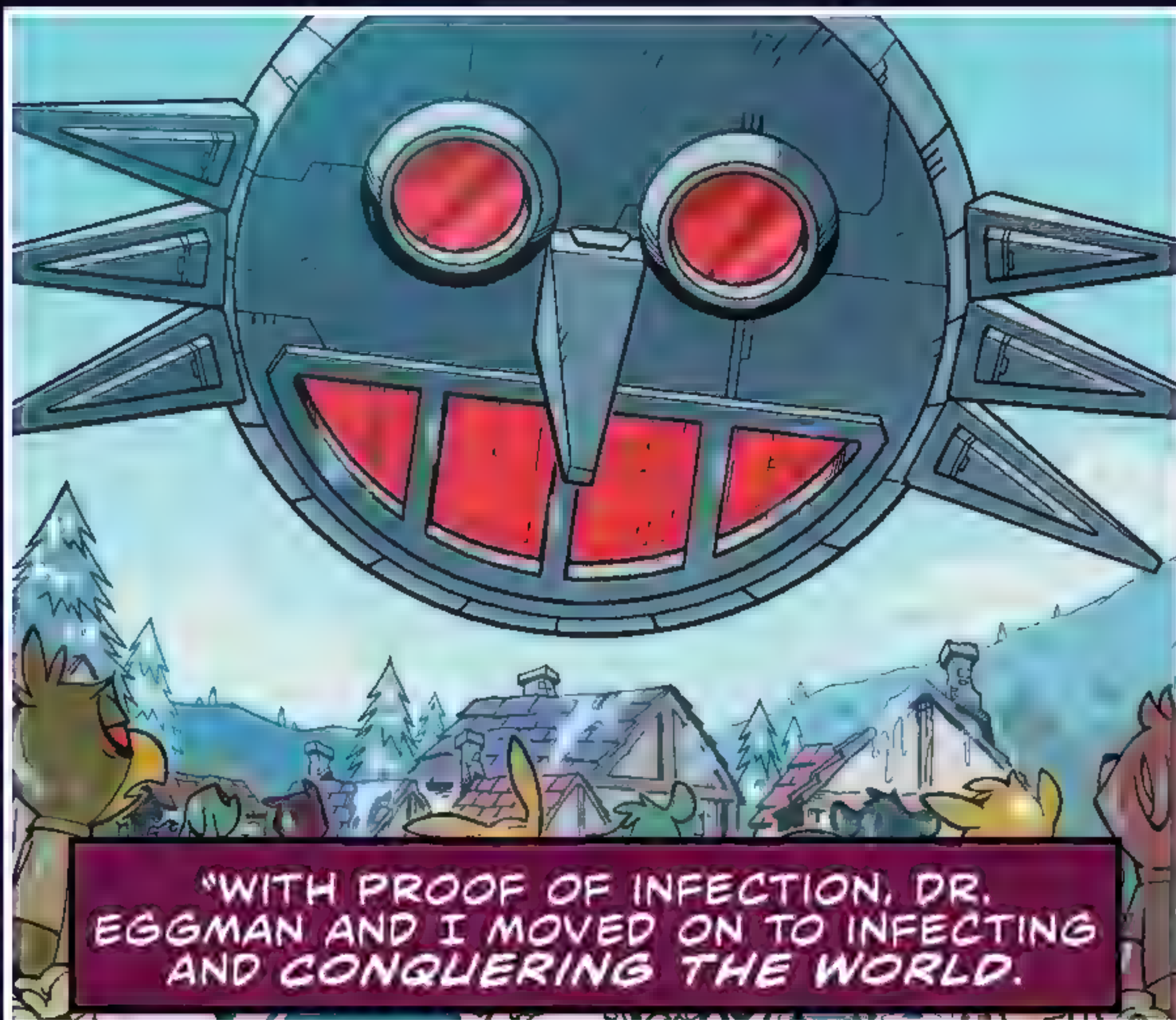
...DAMAGE PRONE.



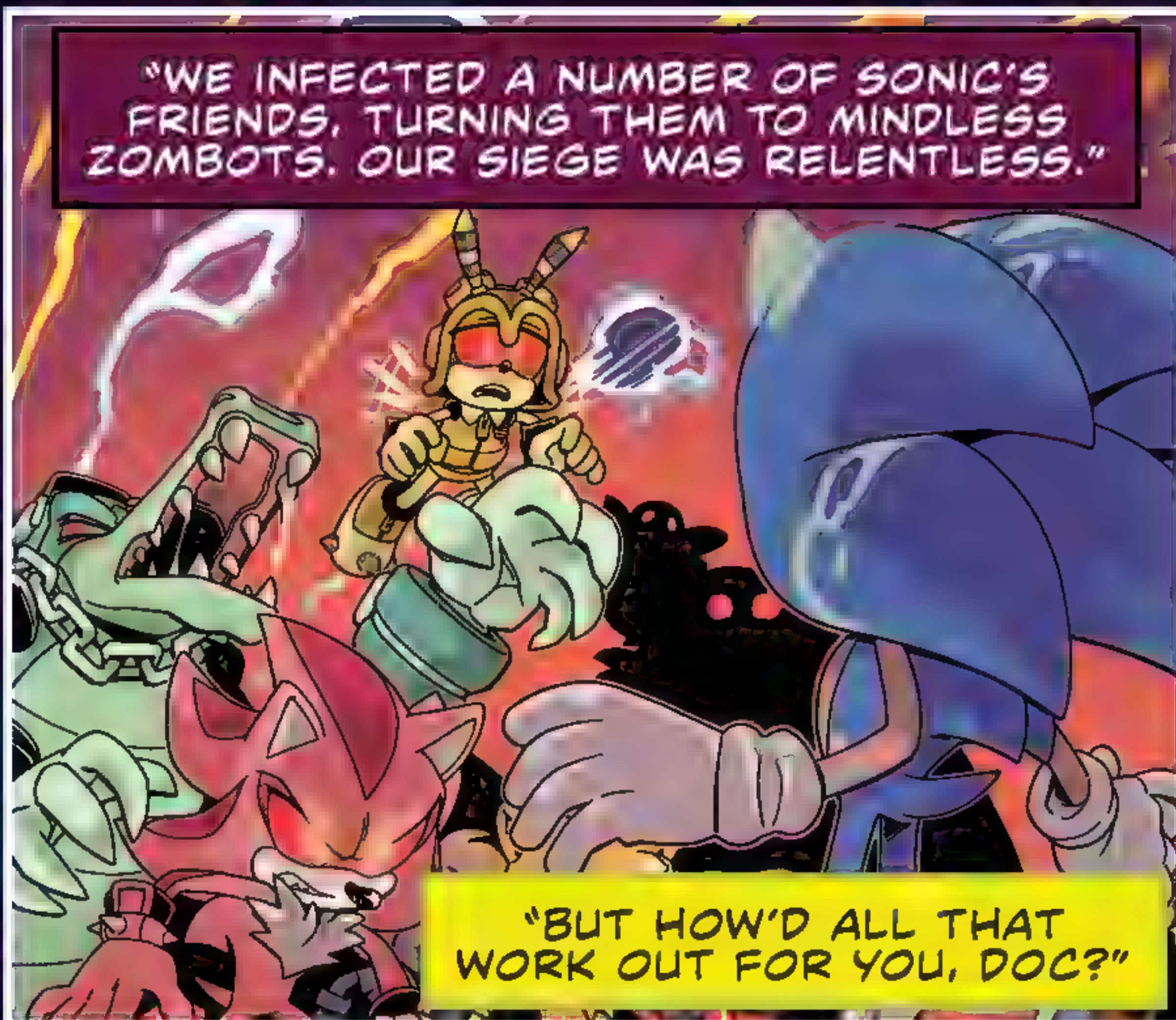
"THEY PROVED ADDITIONALLY USEFUL IN INFECTING SONIC!

"THE ONLY UNFORESEEN DRAWBACK WAS SONIC'S ABILITY TO STAVE OFF THE VIRUS WITH HIS SPEED."



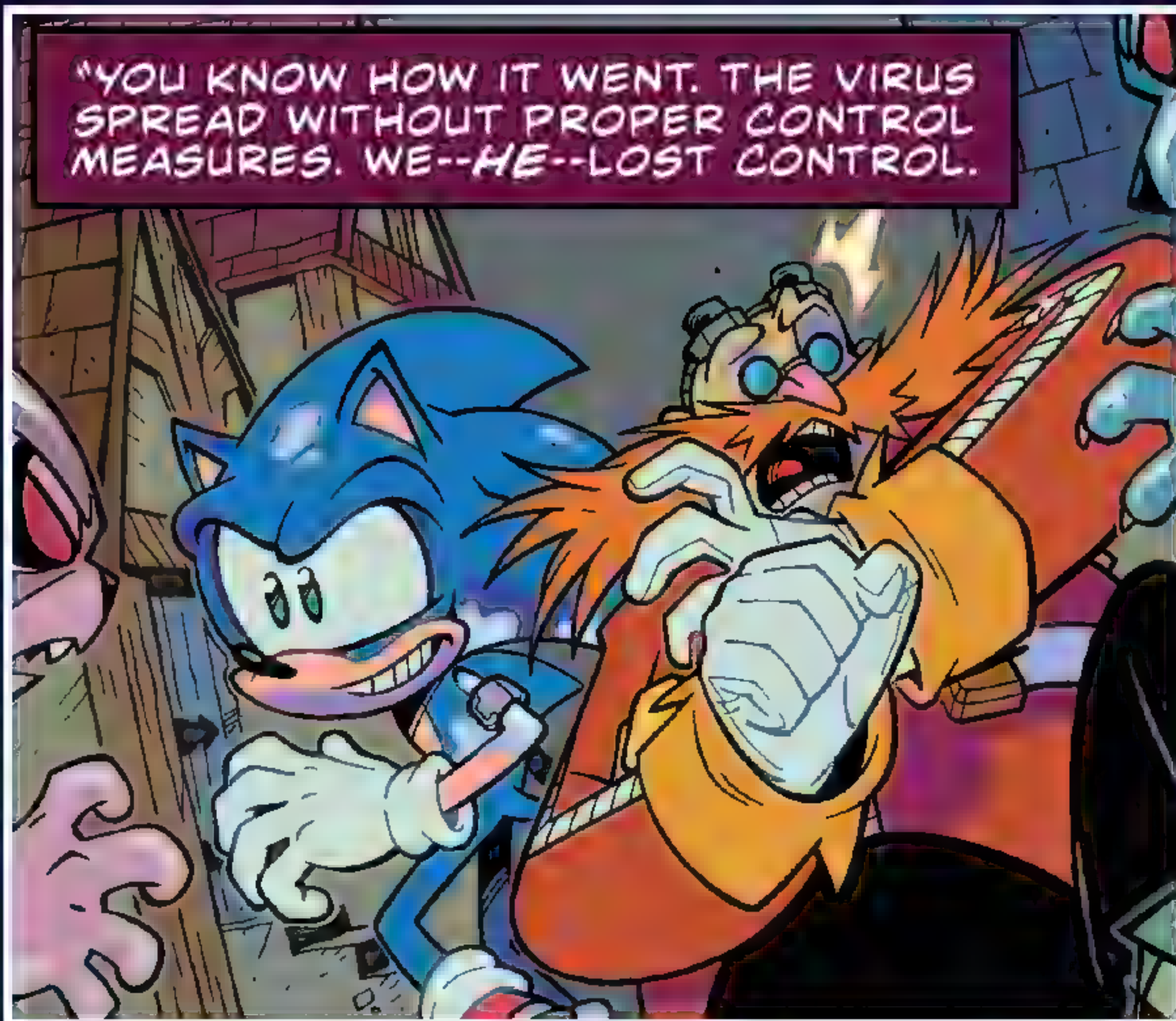


"WITH PROOF OF INFECTION, DR. EGGMAN AND I MOVED ON TO INFECTING AND CONQUERING THE WORLD."

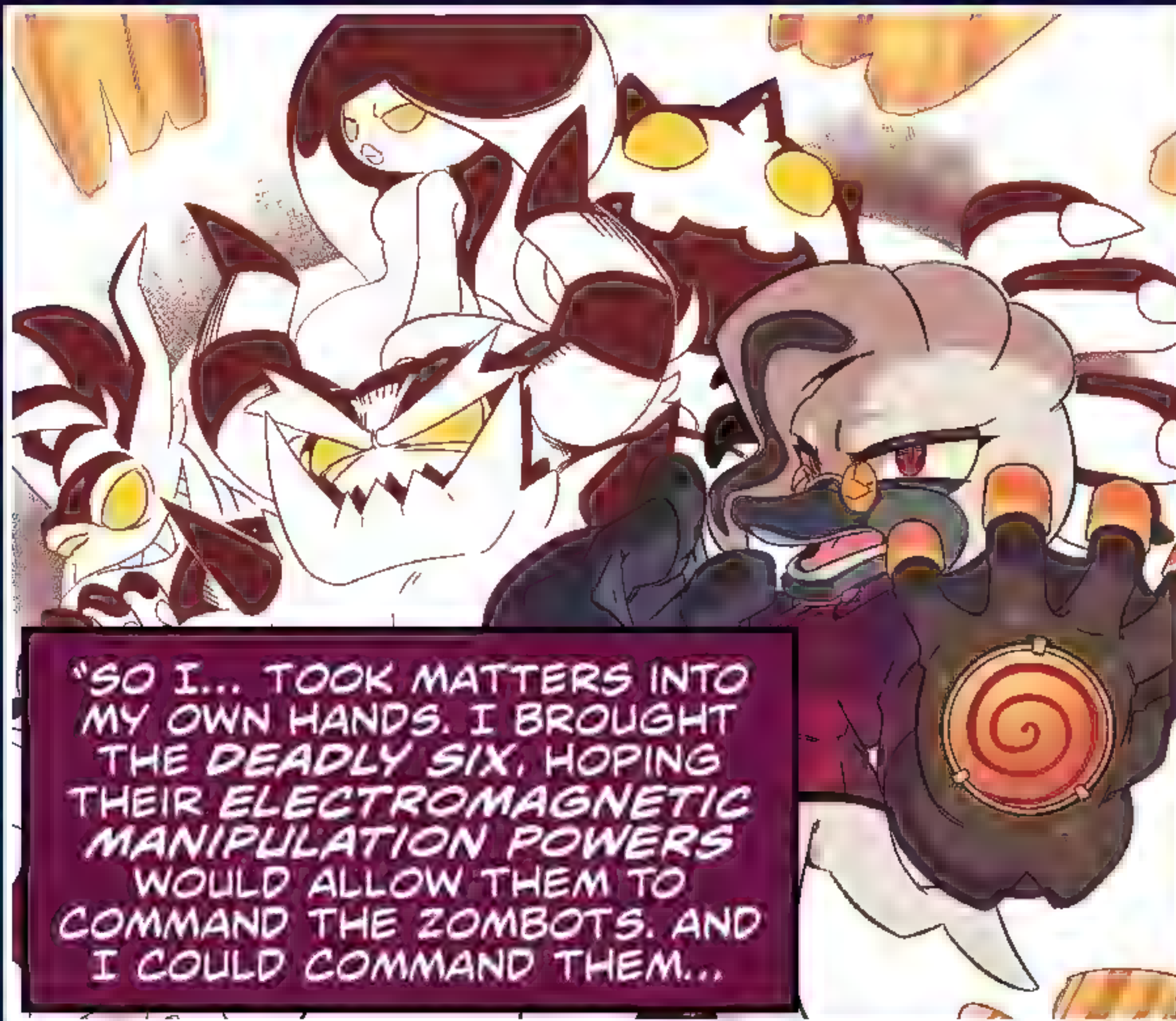


"WE INFECTED A NUMBER OF SONIC'S FRIENDS, TURNING THEM TO MINDLESS ZOMBOTS. OUR SIEGE WAS RELENTLESS."

"BUT HOW'D ALL THAT WORK OUT FOR YOU, DOC?"



"YOU KNOW HOW IT WENT. THE VIRUS SPREAD WITHOUT PROPER CONTROL MEASURES. WE--HE--LOST CONTROL."



"SO I... TOOK MATTERS INTO MY OWN HANDS. I BROUGHT THE DEADLY SIX, HOPING THEIR ELECTROMAGNETIC MANIPULATION POWERS WOULD ALLOW THEM TO COMMAND THE ZOMBOTS. AND I COULD COMMAND THEM..."



"...NO USE DWELLING. THEY TOOK MY CAREFULLY SECURED CHAOS EMERALDS..."

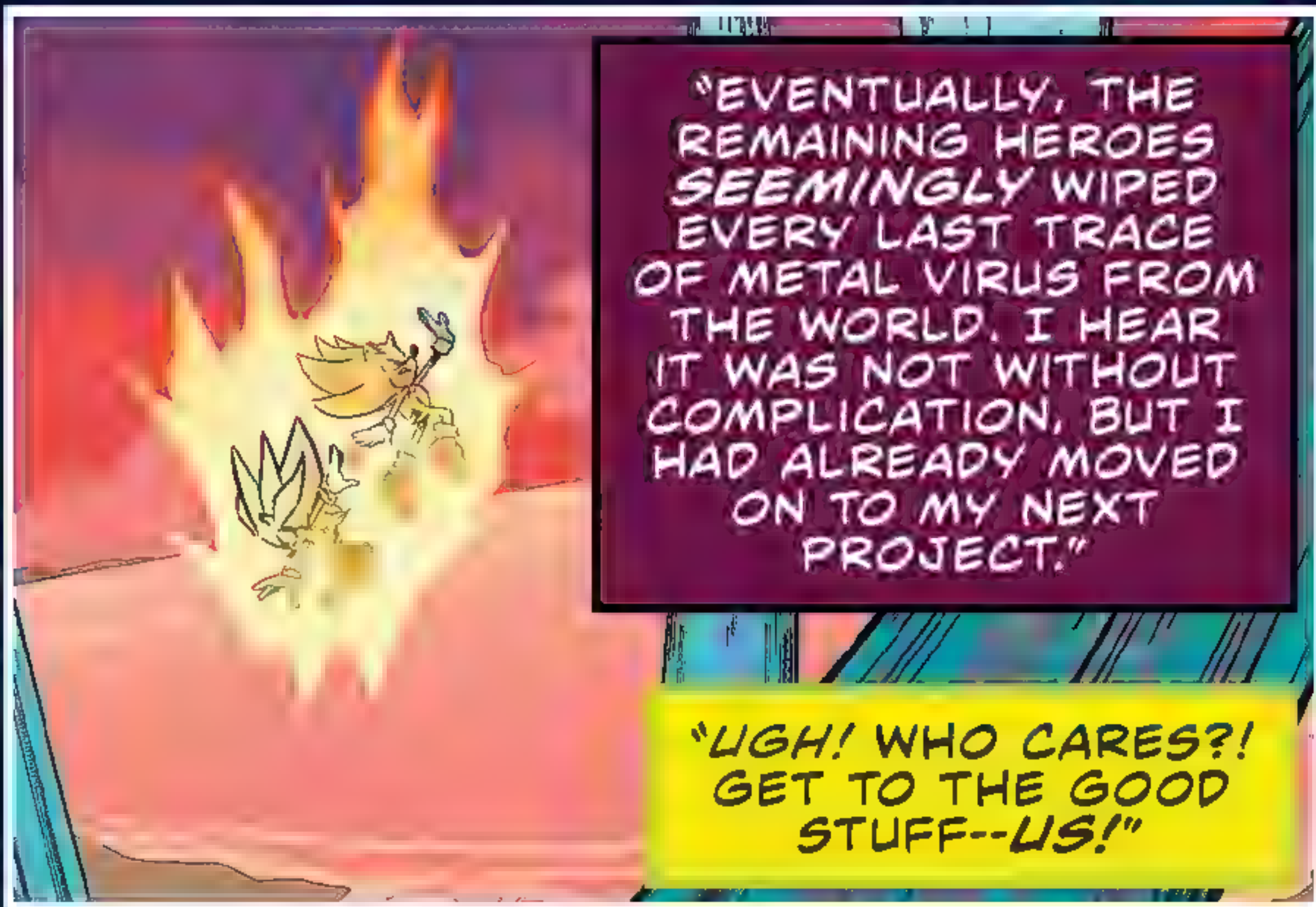


"...AND BOOTED US TO THE HEROES' FEET."



"TRULY, THE WORST OF DAYS. MY MENTOR--MY HERO--BETRAYED ME. HE TOOK MY SPACE-ALTERING GEMSTONE, THE WARP TOPAZ. AND HE WORKED WITH SONIC AND FRIENDS...

"...TO SAVE THE WORLD FROM HIS OWN INCOMPETENCE."



"EVENTUALLY, THE REMAINING HEROES SEEMINGLY WIPED EVERY LAST TRACE OF METAL VIRUS FROM THE WORLD. I HEAR IT WAS NOT WITHOUT COMPLICATION, BUT I HAD ALREADY MOVED ON TO MY NEXT PROJECT."

"UGH! WHO CARES?! GET TO THE GOOD STUFF--US!"



"YOU'RE COMING UP. OPERATION: REMASTER WAS THE END-GOAL OF MY NEXT MOVES."

"FIRST, I RECRUITED A TEAM OF LACKEYS--ZAVOK, ROUGH, TUMBLE, AND MIMIC--TO HELP ME ASSEMBLE..."



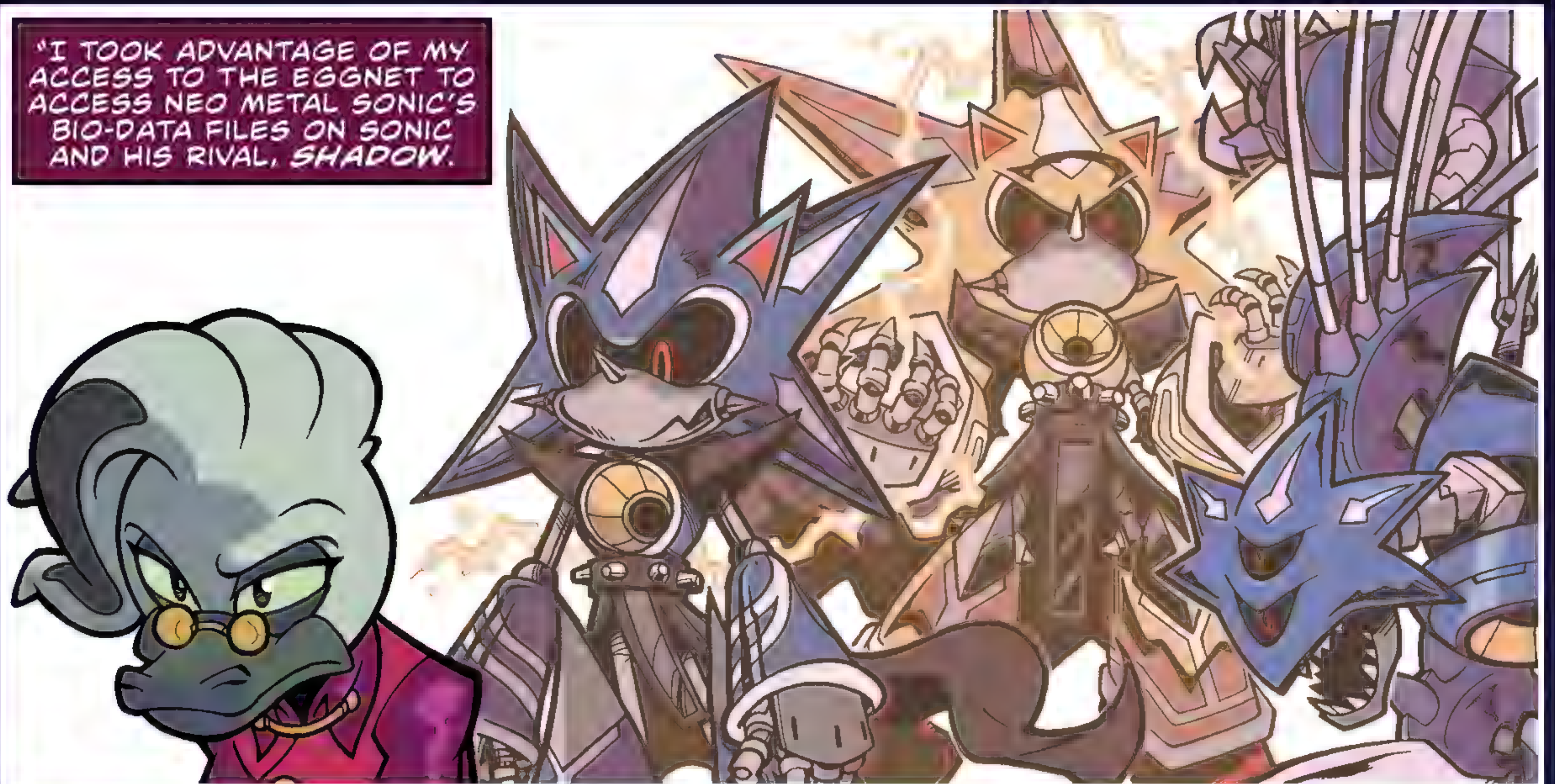
"...THE TRICORE!"

"WITH IT, I COULD NEARLY MATCH THE SPEED OF SONIC, THE HEIGHTS OF TAILS, AND THE STRENGTH OF KNUCKLES."



"MY EFFORTS PAID OFF. I WAS ABLE TO TAKE OVER EGG BASE SIGMA AND ESCAPE MY TREACHEROUS LACKEYS--WHO TAUGHT ME A VALUABLE LESSON ABOUT HOW TO WORK WITH OTHERS."

"I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF MY ACCESS TO THE EGGNET TO ACCESS NEO METAL SONIC'S BIO-DATA FILES ON SONIC AND HIS RIVAL, SHADOW."

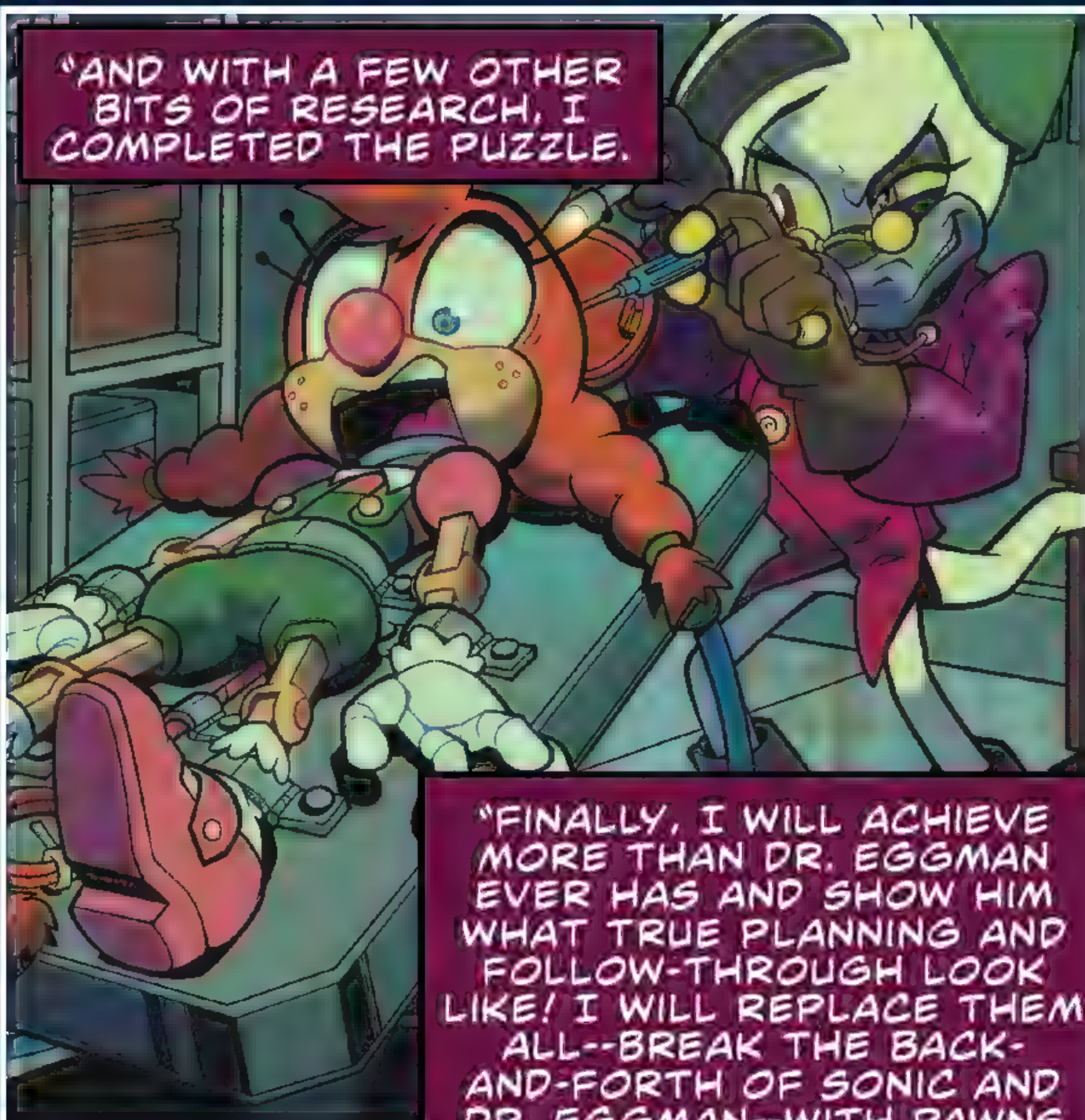


TIME TO GO, FOX.

"I ADDED IN MY WELL-TESTED KNOWLEDGE OF POWER CORES--LIKE THOSE IN MY TRICORE-- AND I ACQUIRED A BIT OF ADDITIONAL BIO-DATA FROM SONIC'S MOST USEFUL ALLY, TAILS."



"AND WITH A FEW OTHER BITS OF RESEARCH, I COMPLETED THE PUZZLE."

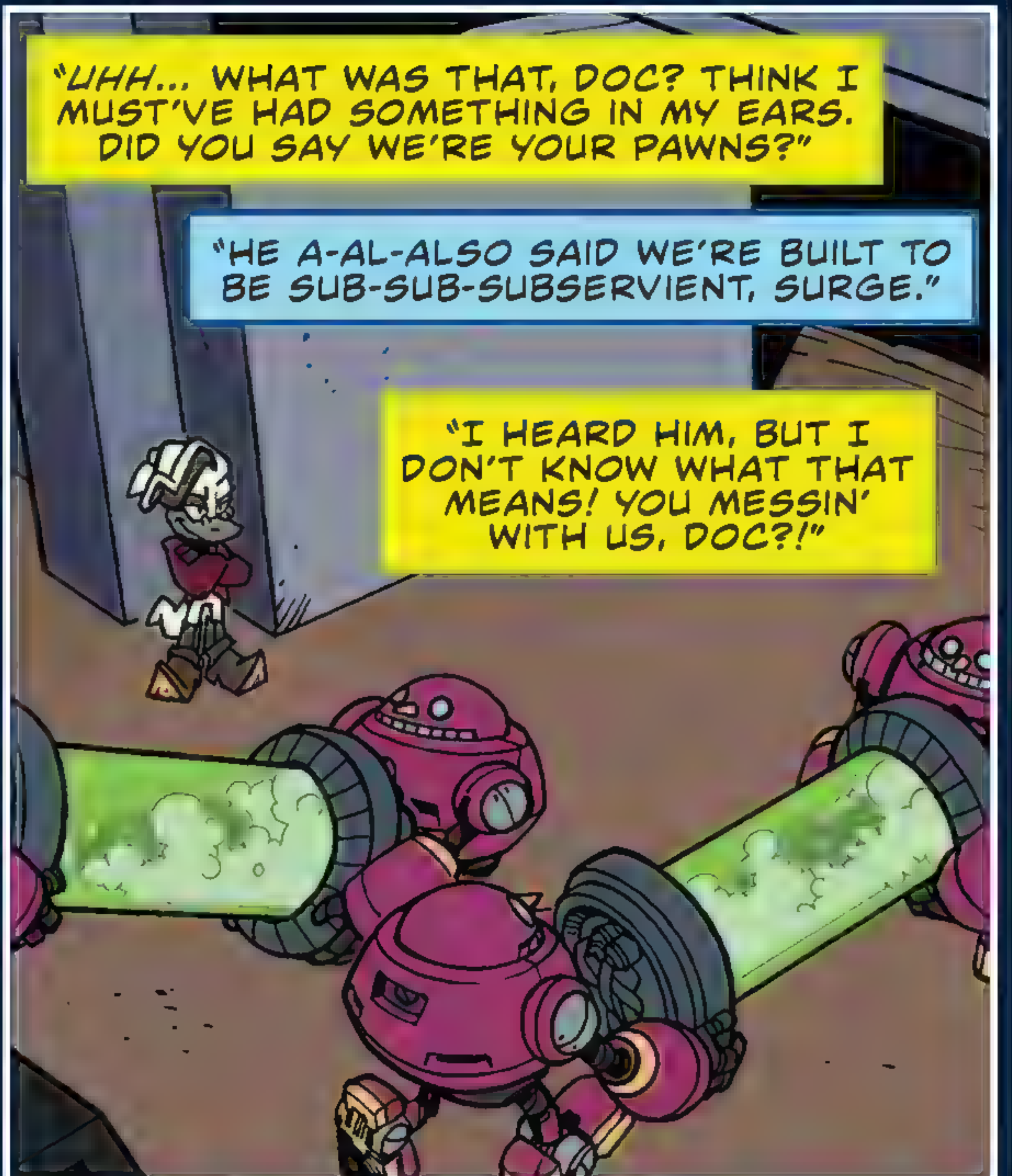


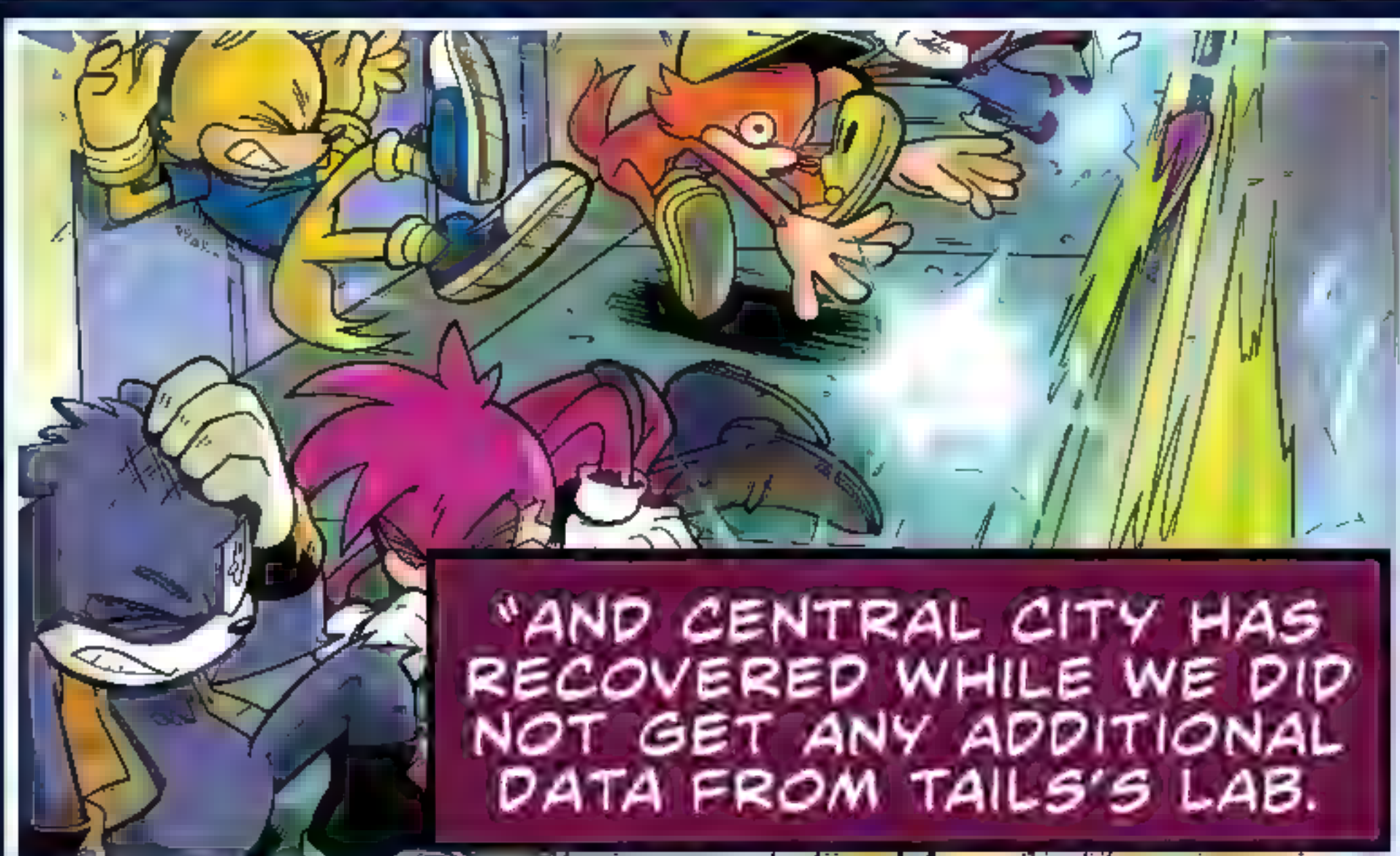
"FINALLY, I WILL ACHIEVE MORE THAN DR. EGGMAN EVER HAS AND SHOW HIM WHAT TRUE PLANNING AND FOLLOW-THROUGH LOOK LIKE! I WILL REPLACE THEM ALL--BREAK THE BACK-AND-FORTH OF SONIC AND DR. EGGMAN--WITH PAWNS THAT BELIEVE THEY'RE SELF-DETERMINED, BUT ARE TOTALLY SUBSERVIENT TO ME AND ME ALONE!"

"UHH... WHAT WAS THAT, DOC? THINK I MUST'VE HAD SOMETHING IN MY EARS. DID YOU SAY WE'RE YOUR PAWNS?"

"HE A-AL-ALSO SAID WE'RE BUILT TO BE SUB-SUB-SUBSERVIENT, SURGE."

"I HEARD HIM, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS! YOU MESSIN' WITH US, DOC?!"







ART ADAM BRYCE THOMAS

SONIC

LETTERS SQUAD

Hi, pals! Thank you for joining Ian Flynn, Bracardi Curry, and Shawn Lee for another fun Free Comic Book Day story! And don't forget to pick up issue #50, out in June, now that you're all caught up! Now, on to your art.





ART BY
CARLO



Thank you for joining us, Squad. Please don't forget to send your art and letters to letters@idwpublishing.com, and make sure to mark them: "OKAY TO PRINT!" And join the IDW Sonic Comics Squad on Facebook!

**THEY'RE BAD.
AND THEY'RE BACK!**



**DR. STARLINE HAS A NEFARIOUS PLAN,
BUT HE'LL HAVE TO RECRUIT SOME FAMILIAR
AND NOT-SO-FRIENDLY FACES TO DO IT!**

ON YOUR MARKS. GET SET. **GO!**



IAN FLYNN • TRACY YARDLEY
EVAN STANLEY • ADAM BRYCE THOMAS
JENNIFER HERNANDEZ

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